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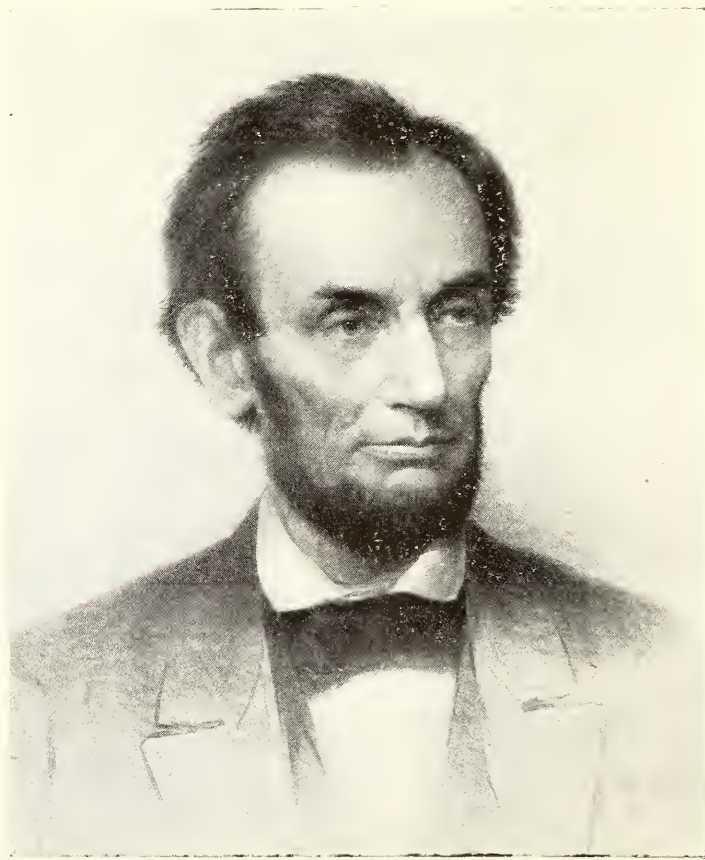


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*Abraham Lincoln*

*From Portrait by F. B. Carpenter.  
Engraved by F. Halpin.*

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS PRESIDENCY

BY  
JOSEPH H. BARRETT, LL.D.

*Illustrated*

*IN TWO VOLUMES*

VOL. I

CINCINNATI  
THE ROBERT CLARKE COMPANY  
1904

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PRESS OF THE ROBERT CLARKE CO.  
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## PREFACE.

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Before the meeting of the Republican National Convention of 1860 I had undertaken, not of my own motion or at first willingly, to write a campaign biography of its nominee for the Presidency. I was confident that my subject would not be Mr. Seward, but had no presentiment that the choice of the convention would be Abraham Lincoln, whom I had then never met. In my first interview with him, soon after the adjournment of the convention (of which I was a member), he earnestly and even sadly insisted that there was no adequate material for such a work as was intended, yet he received me very kindly, and showed no unusual reserve in talking of either his earlier or maturer life. As to both periods, he readily gave such facts as my inquiries invited or suggested; introduced me to friends with whom he had been on intimate terms for more than twenty years; and put me in the way of exploring newspaper files and legislative journals in the Illinois State library for biographic material.

He told me of his correspondence with one of his father's relatives in Rockingham County, Virginia, and

with one of the Lincolns of Massachusetts, without obtaining positive proof of the relationship which later research has rendered certain. Recognizing that his parents were of humble life, and ranking himself with plain people, he distinctly claimed to be of a stock which, though it had produced no man of great eminence, had always been of good repute in general as to both character and capacity. At my request and in my presence (May 24, 1861) he sat for a daguerreotype, which was lithographically reproduced for the volume then in preparation, published the following month.

My personal intercourse with Lincoln was continued later at Springfield, as well as during part of his journey to Washington the next winter, and in that city thenceforward during the rest of his days. While preparing to add a second part to the biography, for the canvass of 1864, access was given me to the needed official papers. With permission, copies were made of valuable documents, not all of which were then used, including autograph letters and papers of the President, General Scott, and General McClellan, not then generally accessible. Additional autograph manuscripts of Lincoln, Chase, and others are now printed for the first time.

In the summer of 1865 there was added to the two parts thus produced a third and longer one, making a volume of over eight hundred pages. With all its defects, the book had an extraordinary sale. A more

## PREFACE.

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deliberate and complete biography was then intended by the author as soon as freedom from interfering duties would permit. That time was long in coming, but the purpose thus deferred was never abandoned. It is now fulfilled, with the advantage gained from constantly accumulating materials, and with the aid of new lights and changed conditions favorable to a more dispassionate estimate of the men and events of one of the most exciting and momentous periods in human history.

A reproduction of Halpin's engraving of the portrait of Lincoln by F. B. Carpenter serves as frontispiece to the first volume, with the artist's approval, given (March 27, 1900) a few weeks before his decease. Of the original painting, President Lincoln said: "I feel that there is more of me in this portrait than in any representation which has ever been made." Chief Justice Chase wrote (in 1866): "The likeness is very faithful and lifelike. Mr. Lincoln's countenance had great mobility, and its expression varied much. I have seen him often with that which you have given him. I think it also his best." The frontispiece of the second volume is a photogravure of the daguerreotype taken just after his nomination at Chicago — lithographed for a campaign biography, but otherwise never before published.

J. H. BARRETT.

LOVELAND, OHIO, *November*, 1903.





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# LINCOLN AND HIS PRESIDENCY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *Lineage — Lincoln Migrations.*

President Lincoln's grandfather, a Kentucky pioneer who bore the same name and met a like fate, was the son of John Lincoln, a Virginia planter of good estate, who had removed from Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley many years before the Revolution. The first of this line born in America was Mordecai Lincoln, grandfather of John, of Virginia, and son of Samuel Lincoln, a native of England, who was one of the early settlers of Massachusetts. The surname is ancient and honorable, having a common origin with the name of an English county, derived from that of a Roman settlement on the site of Lincoln City. The last syllable, with its troublesome mute, is a shortening of the Latin *colonia*. There are instances in early New England documents in which a scribe has written "Linklon" or "Linkhorn" for Lincoln, but none is found in which an autograph signature is thus deformed. The American general after whom one of the three original counties of Kentucky was

named used to be called "Linkhorn" by Southern soldiers. The same bad habit once prevailed more or less in England. On a pillar of the old cathedral of Winchester a small plate of brass, with an engraved inscription, commemorates a martial hero born in "Linkhorne sheire." \*

Samuel Lincoln, a native of Norfolk County, England, was eighteen years old when, in 1637, he settled at Hingham, on Massachusetts Bay. An older brother, Thomas "the weaver," was already there, and another brother, Daniel, came near the same time. There were other Lincolns less nearly related to Samuel among the first proprietors there, including Thomas "the cooper," from whom descended General Benjamin Lincoln of the Revolution. All appear to have been good citizens of the early New England type — plain, industrious, religious people, well esteemed by their neighbors. They or their immediate descendants were connected by marriage with a good share of the families in a community honored by many names of distinction. Of their English ancestry little is definitely known.

Hingham, beautiful in situation, on the southern shore of the bay, a few miles from Boston, had from the first a double industrial life of land and sea — not only farming and mechanic arts, but shipping also, for there were fisheries as well as coast traffic and travel, or even remoter ventures. The original settler did not always stick to the trade he had learned; there was a craving for independent tenure of land; and no virtuous method of gain was despised. If all came here to enjoy freedom of

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\* Milner's History of Winchester, II., 75-6.



conscience, few lacked equal zeal to better their worldly condition. Samuel Lincoln had been apprenticed to a weaver, and may have followed this calling for a time, but we find him later described as a mariner. His oldest son, Samuel junior, was a carpenter, held local office, and served as a trooper in the King Philip War. His great-grandson, Levi Lincoln, a Harvard graduate, was Attorney General under President Jefferson, and declined an appointment to the Supreme Bench from President Madison. He had a brother Abraham, of Worcester, who was a man of local note, and two sons, who were New England Governors — Levi Lincoln, junior, of Massachusetts, and Enoch Lincoln, of Maine.

Another son of the immigrant Samuel, *Mordecai Lincoln* (1657-1727), was a busy and prosperous man — blacksmith, iron founder, owner of mills and lands — and became one of the richest colonists of his time. By his wife Sarah, daughter of Abraham Jones, of Hull, he had three sons — *Mordecai*, junior, Abraham, and Isaac, — and by a second marriage, late in life, he had a son Jacob, born in 1711. Not far from this date the two oldest brothers, already of age, sought new homes in New Jersey, afterward crossing the Delaware — their local relation to Philadelphia being, all the while, like that of their immediate progenitors to Boston. In spite of Puritan and Quaker antagonism there was no impassable gulf between the two communities. A Harvard graduate, who was a school teacher in Hingham when these two Lincoln brothers were boys, and who was the son of a partner of their father, had founded the first Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia; and here a youth

#### 4 LINCOLN AND HIS PRESIDENCY.

from Boston, named Benjamin Franklin, for some time attended on his ministration — not altogether with profit. \*

The second Mordecai married Hannah, daughter of Judge Richard Salter, of Monmouth County, New Jersey. John Bowne, a near relative of her mother, left an estate substantial enough to support a protracted contest over its distribution, Mordecai Lincoln being one of the defendants. Disposing of his mining interests in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1725, he bought and settled on a large tract of land in what is now Berks County, where he died in 1736. He fraternized with the Society of Friends, was a man of good condition, and in legal papers was styled "gentleman." In his will he bequeathed to his son *John* three hundred acres of land in New Jersey, derived from the latter's maternal grandfather, Richard Salter, and divided the Berks County tract between three sons by a second marriage. The youngest of these, Abraham, resided all his life in the house his father had built near the city of Reading; served several terms in the Legislature, and was a member of the Convention which framed the first Constitution of Pennsylvania.

In this region a generation of Lincolns and Boones grew up together, and the families were allied by marriage. Before Daniel Boone removed with his father to the Yadkin River country, in North Carolina, *John Lincoln* settled in the Upper Shenandoah Valley, where

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\* The preacher in question, of whom Franklin writes in his autobiography without giving his name, was the Rev. Jedidiah Andrews.

he bought six hundred acres of land near Harrisonburg, in the original county of Augusta, of which the chief town was Staunton, just across the Blue Ridge from Charlottesville, not then boasting of its University or its Jefferson. The next three generations of this family were to differ widely in environment from the three which preceded. The nearest capital towns were Philadelphia — accessible by wild and tedious ways, across the Potomac and South Mountain — and Williamsburg, Virginia, to which the journey was comparatively easy. On the west were the great Alleghanies, and a world unknown beyond. Here pioneer life was to begin anew, without advantage from nearness of seaboard or city.

John Lincoln lived until 1792, and had five sons: John and Jacob, who remained in Virginia, and *Abraham*, Isaac, and Thomas, who in early manhood moved on into remoter wilds across the mountains. Abraham entered three separate tracts of land in Kentucky, on one of which, in what is now Bullitt County, he settled about the year 1784. Here the rifle-shot of an Indian, who had stolen upon him unawares while at work, suddenly ended his days. His widow and their five children, all of whom were born in Virginia, thereupon moved to the neighborhood of relatives in Washington County. The oldest son, Mordecai, aged about fourteen at the time of his father's death, was legal heir to his titles of land — a nominal estate of seventeen hundred acres, promising to be of a value greater than the estate of any of his American ancestors, but proving, through conflicting or defective records and surveys, to be of little real worth. He became a man of

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prominence and good standing.\* Josiah, the second son, early removed to Harrison County, Indiana; and two daughters, Mary and Nancy, married and settled in Kentucky. The youngest son, *Thomas*, a mere child when the family came from Virginia, was the father of President Lincoln.

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\*“ I remember to have heard my uncle, Judge Paul I. Booker, remark to some hotheads when Lincoln was first elected President: ‘I do not know Abraham Lincoln, but if he is as good a man as his uncle Mordecai, whom I served with in the Legislature of Kentucky, you need have no fears.’ ”—W. F. Booker, Clerk of Washington County, Kentucky, to the writer, March 26, 1895.



## CHAPTER II.

1809-1830.

*Parentage — Childhood in Kentucky — Youth in Indiana.*

Much has been inconsiderately written and said about Thomas Lincoln. The violent death of his father suddenly and sadly deranged the affairs of the family, and the loss of paternal care was especially unfortunate for one of such tender age. As he grew up, he became more unsettled and less thrifty than his brothers. Once, before he came to his majority, he went off to find his uncle Isaac in Eastern Tennessee; succeeded in his quest; and worked for a year or more on his uncle's farm.\* Later, he was employed for a time in Elizabethtown, Hardin County, where he learned carpentry, and perhaps cabinet-making, in which he afterward showed some skill. He was not lacking in an honest inclination to earn his own living, though he was too readily content with what barely sufficed for the simplest wants. Reared to labor, much in the open air, and used to hardship, he had great physical strength, with a certain robust relish for the rough life of the border. He had no opportunity for even rudimentary schooling, yet he could write his

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\*It was probably a son of this uncle whose name appears in the following quotation from the family record of a noted personage: "Married, at Greenville, by Mordecai Lincoln, Esq., on the 17th day of May, 1827, Andrew Johnson to Eliza McCardal."

name legibly, as proved by his signature to the bond given on procuring his marriage license. He was a religious man, with human limitations; companionable, having a store of shrewd maxims and apt stories; and withal one of those peaceable men who are not to be scornfully trifled with. An octogenarian clerk of court, who knew him during his residence in Elizabethtown, said more than fifty years afterward: "He was a hale, hearty-looking man, of medium height, rather clumsy in his gait, and had a kind-looking face. He was a moderately good house-carpenter, some of his work remaining to this day in the neighborhood. He was quite illiterate, and was regarded as a very honest man."

On the 12th of June, 1806, when in his twenty-ninth year, Thomas Lincoln was married to Nancy Hanks, six years younger, whom he had known from her childhood. The wedding was at "Beechland," near Springfield, in Washington County—the place of Richard Berry, in whose family she had lived as a ward for many years. It appears from *The Genealogy of the Hanks Family*\*—the best authority known on this subject—that she was born in Amelia County, Virginia, February 5, 1784, and was the youngest of nine children of Joseph Hanks by his wife Nancy, whose maiden name was Shipley. The father died in Nelson County, Kentucky, in 1793, and his will, of that date, naming all his children, is on file at Bardstown. Her mother dying not long after, Nancy went to live with Mrs. Berry, her mother's sister. This definite account of the parentage

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\*MS., compiled by Mrs. Caroline Hanks Hitchcock, of Cambridge, Mass., to whom thanks are due for information kindly furnished to the author.



and early life of President Lincoln's mother sufficiently disposes of an unfortunate hallucination of Mr. Hern-don. According to the personal description of Nancy Hanks by those who knew her,—all substantially agreeing, with one or two exceptions, due to mistaken identity,—she was slight in form and rather above the medium height of her sex; her features were regular, her hair dark, and her brown eyes bright and gentle. She had a ready sense of the ludicrous, and there was a vein of pleasantry in her talk. She was amiable, devout, and naturally cheerful. Though living where education was slighted, she early learned to read—a slender fact on which weighty events were to depend.

For a year or two the wedded pair lived in Elizabethtown, where their first child, Sarah, was born, in 1807. The carpentry which detained them here being finished, the next year they went to live in another part of the county, occupying land in Nolin Creek valley, near "Hodgen's Mills"—bought before their marriage, and known to-day as Rock Spring Farm. Here, in a log cabin, their son *Abraham* was born on Sunday, the 12th day of February, 1809.

Much of the State was yet as wild and woody as when the Lincolns first crossed the mountains. The third President was still in office, and the Emperor, of whom he had lately purchased "Louisiana," was at the height of his power. This very year Bolivar, the South American Liberator, visited England and our Republic, intent upon political schemes which were to have fruit on his own continent and in Mexico. Henry Clay was just rising to high rank in the party called Republican, whose creed embraced the Resolutions of '98.

But what relation could these things have to the future of a child born in a corner so remote and of parents so obscure?

A noted Illinois lawyer (Mr. U. F. Linder) said in 1865: "I was born within ten miles of the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, only a month later than he. I knew his father and his relatives in Kentucky. They were a good family. They were poor,—the very poorest people of the middle class, I might say,—but they were true."

Of this home on the Nolin, young Abraham was to remember little or nothing, for in three or four years the family moved to another farm near the confluence of Knob Creek with Rolling Fork, several miles eastward. The latter stream, considerably larger than Nolin Creek, from which it is separated by highlands towered with a series of far-looking knobs, runs in an opposite direction, seeking Salt River and the Ohio. His parents still had like relations as before with Hodgenville and the Baptist Church organized there by the first settlers. In his second home he passed the more conscious years of his early childhood.

Almost his earliest recollections were of sitting with his sister at his mother's feet, listening as she read from a book or told tales of imagination or experience. Here his education began, and when still quite young he eagerly read *Robinson Crusoe*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and other books common at plain fire-sides in the older States, but then rare in Kentucky. No public instruction was then available. For a time he and his sister walked a great distance to attend the school kept by a Catholic priest named Zachariah Riney —

possibly a precursor of the Trappists, who founded the noted monastery at Gethsemane, in that region. Later, he in like manner became a pupil of Caleb Hazel, his mother's cousin-in-law, who occasionally exercised his gifts as a Baptist minister. Of both these teachers he always retained pleasant remembrance, though he was under their tuition but a few months in all. He was not yet eight years old when he left Kentucky. One of the last incidents he recalled of his life there was accompanying his mother in her parting visit to the grave of her youngest child, a son who died in infancy.

Hard times came with the War of 1812, and lasted long. As some relief, the Government offered its wild lands north of the Ohio to new settlers on credit. There were serious troubles, too, about land titles in Kentucky; nor was its labor system kind to people who labored. Slavery was now firmly established there, and the man of small means had less chance of rising than of lapsing into the scorned class of "poor whites." Thomas Lincoln chose to live in a free State. That this was one of his motives for a change was explicitly declared by his son.\* In spite of this fact (or in ignorance of it) a Boston biographer has scornfully affirmed that "whatever poetic fitness there might be in such a motive, the suggestion is entirely gratuitous and without the slightest foundation." † One of the authorities cited (Lamon) would have us believe there were very few slaves in that part of Kentucky, and no trouble whatever about slavery.

A different story was told by the noted Methodist

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\*See "Complete Works," Nicolay and Hay, I., 639.

†Morse's "Abraham Lincoln," I., 10-11.

preacher, Rev. Peter Cartwright,—a native of Amherst County, Virginia, who removed near the same time from Kentucky to Illinois, avowedly because he was unwilling to bring up his children in the midst of slavery. He was Elder of the Salt River Circuit, Kentucky, in 1808, belonging to the old Western Conference, which met in that year at Liberty Hill, Tennessee, and at Cincinnati in 1809. In his Jubilee address at Lincoln, Illinois, September 24, 1869, he told of the refusal of the Conference in 1806 to admit to “the travelling connection” a South Carolina applicant, who owned two slaves, until he emancipated them, “which required expense additional to the loss of his slaves.” During the year 1808 he said “some feeling existed in the bounds of the Conference” in regard to slavery, “and several petitions were presented praying for the adoption of some more specific rule upon the subject.” A rule was adopted that year requiring the expulsion of any member who bought or sold a slave or slaves “from speculative motives.”\* It is known that the anti-slavery leaven was also at work in the denomination to which Thomas Lincoln and his wife belonged.

In the autumn of 1816 the family migrated a long distance westward across the Ohio, into the depths of the Indiana wilderness. A few weeks later the Territory, with but sixty-five thousand inhabitants, mostly on the southern border, became a State.

The quarter section already selected was sixteen miles from the nearest landing on the Ohio, and on this

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\*“Fifty Years a Presiding Elder.”—“I had been a preacher for several years,” he said, “before I saw a shingle-roofed house of any description.”



place, near Gentryville, there is now a station named Lincoln, twenty miles by railway from Rockport, on that river. The principal stream in the vicinity is Little Pigeon Creek. At first there were very few settlers within many miles. Years passed before a store was opened or the logs were hewn for the Little Pigeon Baptist meeting-house. Here, from his eighth year to his majority, Abraham Lincoln had his chief experience of pioneer life.

The subjugators of a continental wilderness had always to begin with a very simple domestic shelter, and to live under hard conditions, that improved but slowly at the best. A prolonged contest—with the pitiless elements, with resisting nature, often with the unrelenting savage,—alone made the building of our republic possible. The doers of this work are true kin of the old heroes and demi-gods. Hercules, “by conquering the lawless powers of nature,” says Curtius, “prepared the soil for a rational order of life; he is the regular symbol of the pioneering agency of the earliest settlements.” To descend from Hercules was a Grecian’s glory.

Bishop Meade, of Virginia, whose father, impoverished by the Revolution, began life anew near Winchester, wrote: “The whole country was little less than a forest at that time. For a small sum he purchased a farm, with two unfinished log cabins, around which the wolves nightly howled. Laying aside the weapons of war, he took himself to hard labor with the axe, the maul, and other instruments, while my mother exchanged the luxuries of Lower Virginia for the economy and diligence of a Western housewife.”

The historian of early Kentucky, Humphrey Marshall, spoke from personal knowledge when he said: "Much use was made of the skins of deer for dress, while the buffalo and bear skins were consigned to the floor for beds and covering." He describes pioneer furniture in general in almost the identical words which have been used to describe the interior of Thomas Lincoln's log cabin: "A like workmanship comprised the table and the stool — a slab hewn with an axe, and sticks of a similar manufacture set in for legs supported both. When the bed was by chance or refinement elevated above the floor and given a fixed place, it was often laid on slabs placed across poles supported on forks set in the earthen floor; or where the floor was puncheons, the bedstead was hewed pieces pinned on upright posts or let into them by auger-holes. Other utensils and furniture were of a corresponding description, applicable to the time." Through all that was worst in this rough life he saw and admired "that sort of Spartan virtue" essential in founding new countries. Many of our American ancestors in the oldest States passed through an experience not widely different.

Gentryville is farther south than Louisville or St. Louis. Around its site the newcomers found a rich soil and much green turf beneath the forest trees, with sometimes a luxurious undergrowth, forming almost impenetrable thickets. Ferocious beasts prowled about; and there were deer, wild turkeys, and other game, furnishing an abundance of wholesome food. Young Abraham distinguished himself at an early day by a good rifle-shot, though he never acquired his father's zest for



hunting. Large of his age and strong, he did good service with the axe almost from the beginning of his Hoosier life. With young David Turnham for a companion, he watched for deer coming to the licks on the neighboring prairie, and made long trips on horseback to the nearest mill (save of hand-power) for grinding corn. On one of the latter occasions, when he was in his tenth year, as he said in 1860, he met with an accident serious enough to be lastingly remembered. When urging his horse, which furnished the power at the mill for his own grist, a kick of the animal rendered him unconscious, and for some time he was thought to be dead. On reviving, he finished the interrupted word of command to the horse as though nothing had intervened — a mental phenomenon which he made the subject of philosophical comment in later life.

During the first two years here, new settlers were gradually coming. The great event of the year 1818 was the appearance of an epidemic known as "milk sickness," of which several persons died. The disease, still occasionally heard of, seems to have no recognized place in systems of pathology. Malarious poison enough was certainly inhaled or imbibed in these woods, but some evil power besides must have aggravated its effects.

Mrs. Lincoln died on the 5th of October in this year, aged nearly thirty-five. It is not quite certain whether the mysterious malady was the cause, for there is a local tradition that she died of consumption. It is further noticeable that her son once spoke of "milk sickness" as being very much like quick consumption. There was no doctor within calling distance, and there was

no professional diagnosis of the case. An old resident of Spencer County, who knew her well during the two years she lived in Indiana, said, in 1862, that Mrs. Nancy Lincoln was a woman of superior mind, though she had but little education; that she had "great amiability and kindness of heart," was "quick-witted," with a "humorous turn" in her talk; and was "more energetic than her husband." The loss of his mother was the first great grief of young Abraham, then not quite ten years old. The love of reading acquired through her inspiration and help was of itself enough, in his condition, to justify his saying: "I owe all that I am or hope to be to my angel mother." His recollection of her seemed always to be quite clear and vivid, and he ever spoke of her with tenderness and reverence.

What could be done as housekeeper by a girl of twelve, Sarah did for more than a year; but a matron's care was too visibly lacking, and the father decided to ask the help and hand of one he had early known as Sally Bush, now living in widowhood at Elizabethtown. She had married Daniel Johnston, the jailor, who died, leaving three children and little property. Evidently Thomas Lincoln was quite unconscious of any stain on his reputation where he was best known. All the gossip to the contrary, of which more than enough has been repeated by some writers, is plainly of later invention. In 1874 Samuel Haycraft, the veteran clerk of the court of Hardin County, said of this courtship and marriage:

"I was born in this town on the 14th of August, 1795, and have a good memory of persons and things as they existed in 'auld lang syne.' I knew Thomas

Lincoln well.\* . . . His second wife was originally Miss Sally Bush, daughter of Christopher and Hannah Bush, and was raised in Hardin County, half a mile from Elizabethtown. She was married to Daniel Johnston on the 13th of March, 1806, and lived in Elizabethtown, where he died early in April, 1814, of what was called 'cold plague.' . . . His widow continued to live here until the 2d of December, 1819. Thomas Lincoln returned to this place on the 1st day of December, and inquired for the residence of Widow Johnston. She lived near the clerk's office. I was the clerk, and informed him how to find her. He was not slow to present himself before her, when the following courtship occurred. He said to her:

" 'I am a lone man, and you are a lone woman. I have knowed you from a girl, and you have knowed me from a boy; and I have come all the way from Indiana to ask if you'll marry me right off, as I've no time to lose.'

" To which she replied: 'Tommy Lincoln, I have no objection to marrying you, but I can not do it right off, for I owe several little debts which must first be paid.'

" The gallant man promptly said: 'Give me a list of your debts.'

" The list was furnished, and the debts were paid the same evening. The next morning, December 2d, 1819, I issued the license, and the same day they were married, bundled up, and started for home."

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\*For Mr. Haycraft's personal description of Thomas Lincoln (the passage omitted here), see *ante*, p. 8.

Surely this man could be very energetic whenever he would!

"Mrs. Johnston, formerly Sally Bush" (continued the venerable clerk) "was tall, slender, very good looking, and was taken in those days to be quite a graceful and gay lady. She was very neat, and thought to have been a good match for Thomas Lincoln. His new wife added much to the comfort of his Indiana home, and she took great interest in the training and education of her stepson, Abraham."

Dennis Hanks, who had moved to Indiana with relatives of Abraham's mother, lived in the family until he married one of the Johnston daughters; and the other became the wife of Levi Hall, whose mother was also a Hanks. The stepmother was indeed a very kind one, and for the lad especially she had an affection like that of an actual mother, as he fully appreciated then and after.

The Baptist meeting-house and the school-house, both log structures, were presently built, not far away. It happened that two highways — one extended westward from Corydon through Spencer County in 1820, the other northwestward from Rockport a year or two later — crossed each other a mile and a half from Thomas Lincoln's cabin. A store was opened at the corners, and the Gentryville postoffice was established in 1824. William Jones soon became the leading storekeeper, succeeding James Gentry, after whom the place was named, and who continued to be its most prominent citizen. Some one else started a grocery there — "saloon" being a refinement as yet unknown in the West. The blacksmith had earlier arrived; conveniences



were steadily increasing; and the settlement had now an assured position in the world.

At the Gentryville school in the winter of 1823-4 the teacher, in addition to the usual course, gave instruction in "manners" — more rudimentary than the lessons of Chesterfield. Whether due to this training or not, young Abraham, while lacking in personal graces, was politely deferential when speaking to a lady, it is said, touching his hat or cap — sometimes lifting it outright, we may suppose, if his head-gear at the time happened to be promptly manageable. In Indiana, however, as in Kentucky, his school days were few. They ended altogether before he was seventeen.

Except in reading, he found no greater delight as a boy than in going to have a talk with John Baldwin, the blacksmith, a famous story-teller. He also liked to listen to people who lounged at the store. He had a good friend in Mr. Jones, who lent him newspapers, and occasionally gave him something to do. At huskings and merry-makings he was not only noticeable for his figure,—very tall for his years, lank and sallow-faced,—but also for his humor and spirit. If he had just done a hard day's work, it made little difference. He had great physical strength and wonderful endurance. One of his pastimes was to attend the 'Squire's courts at Gentryville, and he would walk the long distance to the county court-house to witness a more stately trial. In 1825 he was employed for some months by a farmer and ferryman at the mouth of Anderson's Creek. This brought him into familiarity with the Ohio River and with new scenes of life and business. In the next year his sister, at the age of eighteen, was married to Aaron

Grigsby — a good match, apparently, for both; yet in a year she died in child-bed. Of this family, that left Kentucky ten years before, there remained in 1828 only the father and son, whom neither hardship nor malaria had dangerously affected.

In the spring of 1828 Abraham gladly accepted the offer of Mr. Gentry to take charge, in connection with his son Allen, of a flatboat cargo of produce to be sold along the "sugar-coast" of Louisiana and in New Orleans. For a youth of nineteen, who was expected to bear the brunt of the undertaking, this commission was a great affair; and it gave him, for the first time, (in reality, not in dream,) a long outlook and excursion among far-off places and people. Of this voyage it is not known that he ever gave any detailed account beyond that of a single adventure—a memorable one—too briefly told.

Looking back at this day through the intervening time, it has much more significance than his modest words would imply that it had in his own mind. In disposing of that part of their cargo intended for sale along the river in Louisiana, the boatmen lingered on their way, pausing at one and another plantation. Just below Baton Rouge, one night, they had cabled their craft to the shore, expecting to remain until morning. But their repose was disturbed by a party of seven negroes, who came on board with the evident purpose of surprising them in sleep, and taking possession of their boat. It was a fight for life, and surely a hopeless one but for the remarkable strength and dexterity of young Lincoln. The murderous looting party — the first of their race with whom he had come in direct con-



tact — were beaten off, and the victors made no delay in pulling out into the current, floating miles away when morning dawned.

After successfully accomplishing their business in New Orleans, they undoubtedly gave some time to observation. Could they have omitted to visit the famous battle-ground of 1815? The West was still proudly exulting in the glories of that field, in which the "hunters of Kentucky" so honorably shared. Jackson himself had lately made his excursion down the river, amid fireworks and huzzas, on invitation to a grand celebration at the scene of his victory, meant to give a good send-off to his candidacy in the Presidential canvass of this year. Returning by steamboat to Rockport, the young navigators were at home again before the end of June.

From Lincoln's birth until the close of his Indiana life and his minority there are no contemporary letters or other writings of himself, or of any associate, to give material help to the biographer. No acquaintance of his in those years ever came to marked distinction. The local gossip of a later generation and the crude recollections of garrulous Dennis Hanks must not be taken at their face value, and they seldom touch the things we would most like to know. Through this haze, however, we may partly discover and securely infer that young Lincoln, like a stolen prince among herdmen, was of different mould from those around him — freely associating with them, but having an independent life of his own. If he had associates that did not contribute to his refinement, he was never subject to them, and could always rise above their influ-

ence. Drinking habits were prevalent, but he had no relish for strong liquors, and seldom if ever tasted any. He shrank from causing needless suffering, and could not bear to see any wanton infliction of pain. This may have been one reason that he had so little to do with hunting and fishing. He was helpful to "the women folks," and in general was liked by them. The oft-told incident of his finding a drunken man lying in the road on a freezing night, and carrying him without help to a cabin, in spite of a companion's advice to "let the drunkard alone," illustrates the habitual kindness of Lincoln in these as in later years. He joined in wrestling and other trials of strength and skill, and was usually the winner. He seems to have been credited with a strength of mind in proportion to his superior physical force and stature.

He helped organize a debating club, and indulged elsewhere occasionally in at least a burlesque harangue. We may credit the report that under provocation he even wrote satiric "chronicles," and that one of these, said to have been preserved, is altogether genuine, though not in all respects commendable. It deserves no special outpouring of censure, however; and its good English and easy style prove that its author had no need to ask the aid of a schoolmaster, as related of Lincoln years later, in framing a political manifesto. He wrote two or three short contributions, which, under friendly encouragement, were sent to a newspaper editor, who published them.

He was much given to reading when he could get a book and a chance — sometimes by day in the open air, more commonly at night by the light of an open fire or

of a tallow dip or taper in his loft. He transcribed passages to be pondered over after the borrowed book was gone. He worked out "sums" in arithmetic with pen and ink, and practiced penmanship in a copy-book or on blank leaves, apparently furnished him by Mr. Jones or some one else from an old ledger. Among the latter exercises were eight lines, of which Mr. Herndon says: "Nothing indicates that they are borrowed, and I have always, therefore, believed that they were original with him." These were in fact the once familiar lines of an older date, beginning:

"Time, what an empty vapor 'tis;  
And days, how swift they are;  
Swift as an Indian arrow flies,  
Or like a shooting star."

Mr. Herndon says positively that certain lines, of which he found a copy in the neighborhood,—alleged to have been sung at Sarah's wedding in 1826—were "composed in honor of the event by Abe himself," but the production was not his, and his connection with the paper at all lacks proof.\*

Having as yet no access to libraries, he borrowed a volume here and there as he could—including Ram-

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\*The "tiresome doggerel," as Herndon calls it, begins:

"When Adam was created  
He dwelt in Eden's shade," etc.

An old and yellowed manuscript agreeing substantially with the Gentryville document, as far as the latter goes, but of greater length, is in possession of the present writer, to whom it came as a family relic, handed down from generation to generation since its date, August 21, 1786. It was written in Massachusetts, but its origin may have been more remote.

sey's *Life of Washington* and a History of the United States. Another was the peculiar biography of Washington by Weems, at one time very popular with young readers in the West, and notably mentioned by him in a speech at Trenton while on his last journey to the national capital. The book is a compound of fiction and fact, even the author's claim (on his title page) to have been "formerly rector of Mt. Vernon" being disputed by Bishop Meade. Imaginary conversations abound in its pages; unheroic realities are freely embellished, if not elevated, by incidental inventions; and the famous hatchet story is among the less ambitious original creations with a moral purpose. We may also add the Autobiography of Franklin, which would do much in this case to encourage a laudable ambition.\* He as yet knew little of Shakespeare or Burns, afterward his favorite poets. The few novels within his reach tempted him little, though later he enjoyed the "Leather Stocking Tales" and other American fiction less permanently in repute. He found solid satisfaction in a copy of the "Statutes of Indiana," more especially from the fact — of much moment — that the volume also contained the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence.

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\*Mr. J. L. Scripps stated in a biographical sketch submitted to Lincoln in 1860, that the latter read at this period the "Life of Franklin," and Plutarch's "Lives." The Plutarch was first read much later, Lincoln said, but the Franklin reading was by silence affirmed. See letter in Cranbrook Press reprint of Scripps, p. 8.



## CHAPTER III.

1830-1837.

*Removal to Illinois — A Second Voyage to New Orleans —  
Captain in Black Hawk War — Surveyor, Post-  
master, Legislator — Menard Legends.*

To dwell in a frame house was not beyond the ambition of Thomas Lincoln. Before the year 1829 was ended he had gathered the needed boards, sawn by hand — the saw-pit still awaiting the belated mill. But the house was never to be for him. Times were hard as ever. President Jackson implored Congress to relieve settlers who had taken lands under the credit system; but his voice was unheeded. Many had to sell improved lands at a loss or to abandon them altogether. And, besides, the Pigeon Creek community had another visitation this autumn from its old enemy, milk sickness. Finally, allured by favorable reports from his friend, John Hanks, who had gone to the Sangamon River country, in Illinois, Thomas Lincoln determined to follow him. The boards went to another farmer of the Gentryville neighborhood and made the Crawford house famous. What remained of the Lincoln farm (one-half had already reverted to the Government) passed into the possession of the more fortunate James Gentry.

Sangamon County was organized in 1821, and Springfield, while as yet having little more than a paper

existence, became the county seat. Farther up the Sangamon River, in Macon County, ten miles west of Decatur, the Lincoln family temporarily settled, early in the spring of 1830. The son assisted in building a cabin and fencing in a field of ten acres — probably his chief experience as a “rail-splitter.” The few months that he spent in Macon County are otherwise of little interest, save as to the manner in which the sojourn ended. Afterward he never visited the place, (near which John Hanks, a successful farmer, remained for life,) nor did the rest of the family continue here long.

The winter of 1830-31 was ever memorable to the early settlers of the State for its marvelous “deep snow.” Before the immense floods of the following spring had fairly set in, “there came a man to that part of Macon County,” said Lincoln in 1860, “looking for hands to run a flatboat to New Orleans.” It may not have been quite by chance that he there met one who was entirely competent for the service who had no previous engagement. A bargain was closed with Lincoln, to be assisted by John Johnston, his step-brother, and John Hanks. At the time appointed for meeting their employer (Denton Offutt) near Springfield, the waters spread far and wide, like a great sea, over which Lincoln voyaged, by canoe, gaining his “introduction to Sangamon County.”

A flatboat was built from timber which they cut in the woods and sawed at a mill; and after the launch all went well until the craft stuck fast on a dam at New Salem, twenty miles down the river. That was on the 18th of April, 1831. The gathered people watched the vain efforts made, as the day wore on, until finally



Lincoln's ingenuity prevailed. The cargo having been removed, holes were bored in that part of the boat projecting over the dam; the water ran out as the rear was elevated, and a combination of main strength did the rest. Offutt was delighted, bystanders applauded, and the re-loaded vessel resumed its course. The scene of this adventure was to have a more lasting relation to his life. Here Offutt saw what seemed an inviting opportunity for business, in which young Lincoln, to whom he took a great liking, would be serviceable on his return from New Orleans, which happened in due time.

In making two such voyages, Lincoln came to see, as would otherwise not have happened in his early experience, what trouble had befallen the nation from the introduction of a race of men stolen from the midst of a barbarism that was dark and cruel, to serve as labor machines. Their presence as bondmen — indeed, their presence at all — had become a continued source of disturbance. One side of the case he had seen — one to excite his antipathy — when forced to an unwilling conflict at Baton Rouge two years before. On his second trip he encountered enough of the worst visible features of slavery, beyond doubt, to excite a resentful sympathy for its victims. It is less certain that, as alleged, he vowed to "hit that thing if he ever got a chance, and hit it hard," or that a fortune-telling negress told him he would one day be President, and then all the negroes would be free.

New Salem village was of very recent birth, having less than a score of cheap buildings, on a bluff overhanging the Sangamon on the west. Two miles north,

down the valley, is the present town of Petersburg, not then existing or even platted, but which was ere long to absorb the very life-blood of the older settlement and to become the seat of a new county, Menard. In Lincoln's memory this valley as far as Concord, four miles farther on, had a secure place. His busy hours must have been haunted by visions of these bluffs and bottom lands; in solitary revery he must often have heard the roar of Sangamon Falls making monotonous lament while the ghosts of hopes and sorrows, of cares and joys, flitted in the thickening darkness of his spirit. He had floated down on the "deep snow" flood, he once said, and landed here like a piece of driftwood.

Just before the State election, then occurring in August, he returned from a visit to his father (who had finally settled in Coles County), and was pressed into service as a clerk at the polls. It was here, in Clary's Grove precinct, that he cast his first vote. The *viva voce* method, according to the Kentucky code which Illinois had copied, was still in use. The poll-sheet discloses that Lincoln voted for James Turney, Whig, for Representative in Congress, as against Joseph Duncan, Democrat, who was re-elected; for John ("Jack") Armstrong for Constable; and for Boling Green, later his warm friend, for Magistrate. Both the last were elected. Armstrong, as the champion wrestler, was soon after put forward to test the value of Offutt's bragging over the athletic powers of his clerk. Lincoln accepted the challenge of the constable; stakes were put up by the backers of each, and the entire community was astir over the contest. The wrestlers proved to be nearly equally matched. Both kept stoutly on their feet

during a long struggle. Then there was an alleged foul and a dispute, with angry excitement among the friends of each and stormy signs all around. But respectable Mr. Rutledge counseled peace; and under like circumstances peace was probably never more easily secured. In truth, the newcomer had triumphed, as his competitor conceded with an amicable shake of the hand. Ever afterward Lincoln had the respect and good will of these people and a restraining influence over the most refractory spirits.

The new store was hardly opened before bustling Offutt also took possession of the mill at the foot of the bluff, rented from Cameron and Rutledge, two of the earliest adventurers here; and the business was further enlarged, if it was here that Lincoln was employed for a time in "a still at the head of a valley," as he once stated in debate. Young William G. Greene,\* to whom the world is indebted for recollections of those days, was employed to help in these complicated affairs, the two clerks becoming firm friends, fellow-lodgers at the store, and fellow-boarders at Rutledge's tavern. Another acquaintance was a bright and genial, yet short-lived young fellow of bibulous habits, John Kelso, whose enthusiasm over Burns and Shakespeare was caught by his new associate. Boling Green, who lived a mile or two from the mill, had readable books, and gave Lincoln cordial welcome to his fireside. Farther away on the same river road was the farm of Bennett Abell, whose wife was a well-educated Kentuckian and among Lincoln's most esteemed acquaintances here.

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\*Later of Tallula, Menard County—a wealthy farmer and banker. He died in 1894.

As the autumn and winter (1831-2) passed, his twenty-third year closing, it became evident that another change of his lot was impending. In the spring a steamboat, "The Talisman," to test the navigability of the Sangamon River, made a first (and last) trip from St. Louis up to the Springfield landing. This was easy during the floods of the season. Lincoln was called upon to pilot the boat from Beardstown upward. At Springfield the enterprise found a welcome all aglow with brilliant expectations. While enthusiasm grew and generous hospitalities were prolonged, the waters rapidly subsided. To return was now the labor. The same pilot had the troublesome though not profitless job of conducting the boat back to the steadier current of the Illinois. It was the last steam trip on the Upper Sangamon. Offutt, losing heart in his combined undertakings, sold his store, gave up the mill, and departed to the unknown from whence he came, leaving his late clerk free to take a hand in the Indian war, now brewing.

It was early a cherished purpose at the West and South to get the wild red man across the Mississippi. To do this, and to keep him there, counted for the time as an effectual riddance. Black Hawk, a chief of the Sacs and Foxes, had when young gone to Iowa with his tribe, under a treaty surrendering lands in the fair and fertile valley of Rock River — a treaty which he personally confirmed on coming to the chieftainship. With something of the ambition of Pontiac, though without his capacity, he later tried to unite other tribes with his own in attempting to re-possession the ceded land. Gath-



ering a few hundred warriors in the spring of 1831, he crossed over into his native valley and began a savage campaign, not free from the usual atrocities. Before encountering the regular troops stationed at Rock Island and the volunteers called out by the Governor of Illinois, however, Black Hawk and his marauders retreated beyond the Mississippi. After suffering some retaliatory chastisement, Black Hawk sued for peace, and agreed to a treaty requiring him to remain quiet on his side of the river. These events happened while Lincoln was on his last flatboat expedition to New Orleans.

He had scarcely returned from piloting "The Talisman" back to Beardstown, in the spring of 1832, when news came that Black Hawk was again on the warpath in Rock River valley, and Governor Reynolds again called for volunteers to aid in repelling the invasion. Lincoln at once enlisted, as did enough of the "boys" of Clary's Grove and vicinity to form a company, and they were enrolled on the 21st of April as mounted volunteers. At Beardstown, the general rendezvous for the State troops, Lincoln was chosen Captain by vote of the company, much to his gratification as a token of personal favor.

The regiments and the spy battalion levied by the Governor were under the command of General Whiteside, an experienced Indian fighter. Marching northwardly to Oquawka, about eighty miles distant on the Mississippi, and thence into the Rock River valley, they advanced to Prophetstown, which was burnt, and continued as far as Dixon's Ferry without overtaking the flying enemy. There was an alertness among the vol-



unters, an eagerness for giving battle, quite in contrast with the steadier move of the regulars, who were as yet far in the rear. Whiteside allowed two zealous battalions, lately added to his command, to make a reconnaissance under Major Stillman, on the 12th of May. Twelve miles above Dixon they pitched their camp for the night near an inviting creek, since known as Stillman's Run, which proved to be unexpectedly near Black Hawk's main force. When the Indian scouts were driven in, at dusk, the direction of the chase was suddenly reversed, followed by a panic among Stillman's men, which ended all prospect of a night's rest in camp. They rapidly countermarched, suffering considerable loss; but the red chief did not care to rush on three times his number at Dixon's Ferry, and was out of reach next morning. Whiteside's regulars and expected supplies — the latter now greatly needed — had at last arrived. As the end of their brief term of enlistment drew near, the martial ardor of the volunteers had so diminished with increase of experience that few re-enlisted.

Captain Lincoln's company was mustered out at the mouth of Fox River on the 27th of May. Of those honorably discharged there were, besides three Armstrongs and two Clarys, John M. Rutledge and David Rutledge, (the former a nephew, the latter a son of James Rutledge,) and William G. Greene. There were some turbulent fellows under the young Captain's command; his patience was occasionally tried pretty severely, and his utmost tact brought into play, where military training was almost unknown and discipline a word scarcely understood; for these men regarded indi-

vidual bravery and good marksmanship the chief essentials in war, and were ill prepared, in advance of experience, to blend readily the independence of a citizen with the subordination of a soldier. When the real issue came, and a positive assertion of authority was demanded, Lincoln maintained his supremacy fully as much, it would seem, by his qualities as a man as by virtue of his office. One instance deserves to be specially remembered, in which, single-handed against the men of his company, he prevailed in saving the life of a really harmless and friendly Indian, who had come into camp bearing a written passport from higher authority, but whom the soldiers believed to be a pretender or a spy, and were bent on summarily executing. The Captain's bearing and his power on this occasion, according to accounts from some of the men in after years, impressed them as almost supernaturally grand.

When his company was disbanded Lincoln promptly re-enlisted, and served as a private in the scouting battalion of Captain Early, of Springfield. There was some fighting in the vicinity of Galena, and again at Kellogg's Grove in June. Black Hawk crossed the Wisconsin River in the latter part of July, and was finally overtaken on the eastern bank of the Mississippi, near the mouth of the Bad Axe River, and beaten there on the 2d of August. He was captured a few days afterward, to be received at Washington rather as a guest than as a prisoner. Already an old man, he survived for many years, comfortably sustaining the character of a hero in misfortune. Lincoln was not engaged in any battle or skirmish, and the scouting company which he joined was mustered out before the final defeat of Black Hawk.

In a war so meager in military exploit, it is curious to note how many persons then or later distinguished had part—Andrew Jackson being Commander-in-Chief, *ex-officio*. Major-General Scott had set out with a small body of regulars, to put an end to the affair by taking the field in person. Arrived at Chicago, then beginning to grow from a mere military fort into a thin, straggling village, he met a more formidable foe than he was seeking, in the form of Asiatic cholera. He has himself told with some degree of indignation, even in remote recollection, how he was deserted by the only surgeon of his command who had capacity in the medical line, and had to assume the additional characters of nurse and medical attendant for the sick soldiers in camp. He had not fully restored the health of his convalescents when news came that Black Hawk was beaten and the war was over.

Other officers connected with this campaign were Zachary Taylor, then a Colonel of the regular army, and in command of the post of Fort Crawford, at Prairie du Chien; Jefferson Davis, later his son-in-law; Albert Sidney Johnston; Erasmus D. Keyes, a Lieutenant, lately graduated; and Robert Anderson, then Lieutenant of Artillery, acting as Assistant Inspector-General, by whom the volunteers were mustered into the service. Of more immediate importance to Captain Lincoln were two men in the volunteer service, both residents of Springfield: Major John T. Stuart, an educated Kentuckian and an able lawyer, who first met Lincoln at Beardstown at the time of the mustering-in, and John Calhoun, of a prominent Massachusetts family of Scotch descent, said to be related to the eminent Carolina statesman.

Before going to the war, Lincoln had announced himself a candidate for Representative in the Legislature, avowing in his printed address substantially the principles of Henry Clay, and enlarging especially on the feasibility and great advantage of making the Sangamon River navigable by steamboats to the vicinity of Springfield. Stress was also laid upon education under a public school system, and upon legal restriction of the rates of interest. As the county was strongly Jacksonian, he had little to hope as a candidate, even after his return with a popular military record; but he had been strongly encouraged at the outset by Mr. Rutledge and others, who had heard him speak at the debating club, and formed a high opinion of his capacity. They assured him that he would be benefited by running, even if defeated. He was beaten, but in his own precinct, out of the two hundred and eighty-four votes polled, he received two hundred and seventy-five. The prestige thus gained proved to be of essential value.

His next adventure was joining with one Berry in "keeping store"—they buying cheap for credit the goods and good-will of one establishment after another, for New Salem already showed signs of coming dissolution. The consolidated interests were found before spring to be in a bad way, and the summer of 1833 had scarcely begun when Berry departed, leaving all the responsibility to Lincoln, who manfully stood his ground, ultimately making good the claims of every creditor. As country storekeeper he but repeated an experience had by Patrick Henry and Andrew Jackson in their young days, without better success. Before the break-up Lincoln was appointed postmaster (May 7,



1833), and served until the office at New Salem was closed (May 28, 1836), its business being transferred to Petersburg. His postal duties occupied little of his time and brought but a pennyworth of pay.

At this juncture his war acquaintance, John Calhoun, the Democratic Surveyor of Sangamon County, invited him to become his deputy, and put him in the way of the needed instruction. After a few weeks' study of *Flint and Gibson* he became a competent surveyor, and for the next two or three years found a good business in settling boundaries, laying out roads and making village plats. In the meantime he was preparing for admission to the bar, as advised by Major Stuart, who loaned him text-books. All the while he assiduously kept up his historical and other reading. But the cardinal event of this period of his life was his election, two years after his first candidacy, as one of the four State Representatives from Sangamon County. Major Stuart and Captain Lincoln canvassed the county as Whig candidates, making speeches and "mixing" with the people. No caucus nominations were made in those days, and there were six other candidates on the same side. Lincoln had over two hundred votes more than Stuart, and the two were the only Whigs elected.

It may reasonably be imagined that a gentleman like Stuart more than once recalled, in the presence of his youthful colleague, what Jefferson and Randolph thought of Patrick Henry at nearly the same age, as told by Wirt. "His manners," wrote Jefferson, "had something of coarseness in them; his passion was music, dancing, and pleasantry. He excelled in the last, and it attached every one to him. Mr. Henry had, a little



before, broken up his store, or rather it had broken him up; but his misfortunes were not to be traced either in his countenance or conduct." Omitting in the comparison both the music and the dancing, it may be added that in height and angularity the two were as alike as in the other features of this picture. A little later, when Henry applied for admission to the bar, Randolph (afterward the King's Attorney-General) "was so much shocked by Henry's very ungainly figure and address that he refused to examine him." These scruples were at length overcome, and Randolph became satisfied that it was an "erroneous conclusion which he had drawn from the exterior of the candidate."

The young Illinois legislator was at least one not to escape attention, and before the close of his two years' term at Vandalia he had won the favor and influence that precede leadership. Stuart was now foremost among the Whig members of the House, of which James Semple, a Democrat,—afterward United States Senator—was the Speaker. The State was rapidly filling up; land speculation was bringing in Eastern money; it was an era of great expectations. Illinois, it was claimed, only needed liberal legislation toward developing her latent powers to rival the most prosperous States. The Jackson party was in the ascendant, but the measures adopted did not all accord with the Jackson policy. A new State bank, with a capital of one million and a half, was chartered; the old bank at Shawneetown—in suspended animation during the last dozen years—was resuscitated; a loan was granted to the Illinois and Michigan Canal Company, organized in 1825; and several railway corporations, without State

aid, were created. Among the railways thus initiated were the Illinois Central and the Chicago and Galena lines.

It was during the earlier session of this Legislature that Lincoln first met Stephen A. Douglas, not himself a member. "He was then," said Lincoln, "the least man I had ever seen." Short in stature, he was at that time exceptionally thin and meager. Late in the year 1833, while only in his twenty-first year, Douglas had come to Winchester, Illinois (his native State being Vermont), after a temporary stay at Cleveland, Ohio, Cincinnati, and places farther south. The next year he continued the study of law, begun at Cleveland, and took part in local politics. At this session an act, of which Douglas was an active lobby supporter, if not the originator, was passed, taking from the Governor the power of appointing State's Attorneys for the several judicial districts, and providing for their choice by the Legislature. Scarcely as yet an expert in the legal profession, he presented himself as a candidate for State's Attorney in his district against John J. Hardin, a distinguished Whig lawyer, then in office. The movement was so adroit that the younger aspirant distanced his surprised competitor by a majority of two votes in the joint assembly.

To this period belongs a romance, with tragic ending, current among Menard traditions thirty years later. Its substance was then communicated to the writer, as follows: "Miss Ann Rutledge was a rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, fair-haired girl, whose people were a branch of the family of that name so distinguished in the Carolinas,

and were regarded as rather aristocratic. She died in 1835, in the summer. The family left this section a few years later. Lincoln's attachment to Miss Rutledge and his extraordinary grief when she died were matters of current interest among the old settlers when I first knew him."

While there are different versions of the story as ultimately expanded and embellished, it is agreed that Ann had a lover named McNamar, to whom she was engaged, at least as early as 1832. In that or the next year he left for a visit to his former home in the State of New York, promising an early return. She never saw him again, and after two years, with only occasional and not reassuring communications from him, she died. The relations of the two were well known to Lincoln, who was a boarder at Rutledge's tavern, and his heart was moved by Ann's disappointment and prolonged suspense — for it appears that she still loved McNamar — "never quite gave him up." About this date Lincoln memorized the sad poem, "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?" which he afterward often recited. It may be that the briefer lines of Landor's "Rose Aylmer" would have better suited his mood had he known them. The sense of a great personal loss is not the basis of the most poignant grief. Profound sorrow springs rather from an infinite sympathy for the one who has endured all and is forever silent.

During the three years in question, as storekeeper, captain of volunteers, postmaster and surveyor, he was struggling for existence and advancement, actively employing his spare time not only in improving his general education, but also in preparation for law practice. He

was depressed by some unpleasant vicissitudes, such as the seizure of his horse, saddle and surveying implements to satisfy a judgment against him on the notes which were so long a reminder of his "mercantile" experience. The obligations now changed hands, his friends, James Short and W. G. Greene, generously assuming the debts as more gracious creditors, releasing the property levied on. He was also "in politics," canvassing the county in 1834, getting elected to the Legislature, and attending its sessions during the next two winters at Vandalia. All the while he found little leisure for listless brooding. He had the same ambitious purposes, and used like methods to gain advancement, before and after the event which he lamented so deeply.

There are other facts to be considered in this connection. In 1833, Lincoln met and was pleased with Miss Mary Owens, of Kentucky, then on a visit to her sister, his friend and neighbor, Mrs. Bennett Abell. The lady was somewhat older than himself, and there proved to be no special affinity between them, as is evident from the slight correspondence which followed a renewal of the acquaintance in 1836. This renewal occurred through the instrumentality of Mrs. Abell, who seems to have been trying her hand at match-making. Finally Lincoln brought the affair to a crisis — rather awkwardly, it must be added — by writing a letter, in which he formally offered his hand in such terms as he honestly could, though hardly suited to persuade a romantic mind. Her negative response ended what seemed to be a sense of obligation or of virtual commitment on his part. The publication of these letters



was hardly needed on any account; yet they show him to have been at this time neither a very graceful wooer, nor one who had taken a vow of celibacy at the grave of another a few months before. Miss Owens was sensible and good-natured; and between them there was no misunderstanding.\*

As if all the other trials and toils of the time were not enough, it has been added that he wrote an "infidel book." A very few words will suffice for whatever there is of real basis for such a tale. According to all that is known of the matter, the "book" was nothing more than a number of manuscript pages, discussing in a rationalistic way some of the commonly received theological opinions or dogmas — as "incarnation," "atone-ment," or the like — very probably going no farther than is now tolerated in many pulpits not reckoned as "orthodox." It is needless to intimate that he can have had no ambition to be known as an assailant of the Bible or the church. How wide was the range of his arguments can not be told with any certainty, for he permitted a friend to put the writing in the fire without ceremony. Nor is it very material. If we had it, we should be little wiser as to his maturer convictions.

In 1836, Lincoln was again a candidate for Representative. Responding to a demand that the Whig candidates should "show their hand," he said through the *Springfield Journal*, under date of June 13th:

I go for all sharing the privileges of the Government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes

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\*She married a well-to-do farmer, named Vineyard, not long after, settling at Weston, Mo., where she died in 1877.



or bear arms (by no means excluding females). If elected, I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon County my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me. While acting as their Representative, I shall be governed by their will upon all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several States, to enable our State, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it. If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White for President.

Martin Van Buren, the Democratic candidate, was opposed by a faction of the party, who supported Senator White, of Tennessee,—a former personal friend of Jackson, but now alienated,—and with such success that the latter had the chagrin of seeing his own State lost to his favorite and carried by his recusant enemy. The Whigs had no regular nominee—in Massachusetts voting for Daniel Webster, and in other Whig States mostly for General W. H. Harrison. Their only chance for defeating Van Buren was in so dividing the electoral votes as to throw the election into the House of Representatives.

It was in the spring of this year that Lincoln first became personally known to Mr. Joshua F. Speed, henceforward his warm and faithful friend. Mr. Speed, born near Louisville, Kentucky, in 1814, was a graduate of St. Joseph's College, at Bardstown. After an experience of some years in the largest wholesale house in Louisville, he opened a store at Springfield, in 1835, on his own account. During the five or six years follow-

ing 1836 no one had a closer intimacy with Lincoln, who, before they met, already had a certain local fame at the county seat. "I heard him spoken of by those who knew him," said Mr. Speed, in 1882, "as a wonderful character. They boasted that he could outwrestle any man in the county, and that he could beat any lawyer in Springfield speaking." Of what he thought was Lincoln's first speech at that place, Mr. Speed said:

At that time there were but two parties, Whig and Democrat. Lincoln was a Whig and the leading man upon the ticket. I was then fresh from Kentucky, and had heard many of her great orators. It seemed to me then, as it seems to me now, that I never heard a more effective speaker. He carried the crowd with him, and swayed them as he pleased. So deep an impression did he make that George Forquer, a man of much celebrity as a sarcastic speaker and great State reputation as an orator, rose and asked the people to hear *him*. He commenced his speech by saying that this young man would have to be taken down, and he was sorry that the task devolved upon him. He made what was called one of his slasher-gaff speeches, dealing much in ridicule and sarcasm. Lincoln stood near him with his arms folded, never interrupting him. When Forquer was done, Lincoln walked to the stand, and replied so fully and completely that his friends bore him from the court-house on their shoulders. So deep an impression did this first speech make upon me that I remember its conclusion now. Said he "The gentleman commenced his speech by saying that this young man will have to be taken down, and he was sorry that the task devolved upon him. I am not so young in years as I am in the tricks and trades of a politician; but, live long or die young, I would rather die now than, like the gentleman, change my politics, and simultaneously with the change receive an office worth \$3,000 a year, and then have to erect a lightning-rod over my house to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God."

Forquer had been a Whig, but changed his politics, and had been appointed Register of the Land Office. Over his house was "the only lightning-rod in the town or county. Lincoln had seen it for the first time on the day before. Not understanding its properties, he made it a study that night by aid of a book, bought for the purpose, till he knew all about it."

The Whigs elected their Legislative candidates in Sangamon County, with one exception, Lincoln receiving more than an average vote. Each of the seven Representatives and two Senators thus chosen (the number being larger than at the last election) was over six feet in height, and hence they were called the "Long Nine." This was the most numerous representation from any county, and attracted much notice from the influence it wielded. Stephen A. Douglas was a Representative from Morgan County, having recently taken up his residence at Jacksonville. He was never again chosen to the Legislature, and, in fact, vacated his seat soon after the first session, to become Register of the Land Office at Springfield.

As in the preceding House of Representatives, the Democrats had a majority; and Mr. Semple was again the Speaker. Lincoln was assigned a place on the Financial Committee. Besides the members already named, there were many who were afterward prominent in State or national politics, including James Shields, Augustus C. French, Robert Smith, John Dougherty, William A. Richardson, and John A. McClernand. At both sessions Lincoln came forward more actively, gradually becoming recognized as the Whig leader.

Internal improvements were again a prominent sub-

ject of legislation. Under the excitement of the flush times of 1836, this business was indeed much overdone. Through subsequent mismanagement and the revulsion of the next year, the financial affairs of Illinois were presently tangled in a knot, which seemed about to be recklessly cut by a sharp stroke of repudiation. Douglas was one of the most zealous for the improvements. Lincoln warmly favored them. The former, having retired from the Legislature before the crisis, did nothing to avert the discredit which came upon the State, though his party had the responsible ascendancy. Lincoln was active, as the records of the second session show, in his efforts to maintain honest dealing and to provide some method for satisfying all creditors in good faith.

At the first session charters were granted for a number of railways, and provision was made for the completion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, from Chicago to Peru, in La Salle County, and for the improvement of the navigation of the Kaskaskia, Illinois, Rock, and Great and Little Wabash Rivers, with aid from the State requiring in the aggregate a loan of eight million dollars. Scarcely budded before the storm of 1837 came, these schemes were much more luxuriant in blossom than bountiful in fruit.

Slavery agitation had begun anew, and in more deadly earnest, a few years before. In the South it had sprung from the roots of Nullification directly after that baneful growth had been felled to the ground. The dominant party in the Illinois Legislature, stimulated by a reference to the subject in President Jackson's annual message of December, 1836, adopted, near the day of



adjournment, a series of resolutions strongly Southern in tone, in regard to slavery and Abolitionism. Those who refused or hesitated to take this extreme ground were in danger of being called Abolitionists, and that was an opprobrium which few politicians felt able to bear. There was then little anti-slavery sentiment in Central and Southern Illinois, at any rate, to sustain a Representative in refusing obsequious submission to such resolutions. Yet Lincoln could not honestly vote for them. He might have remained silent, but he chose to be frank and open. He entered his protest in the House journal, joined by only one other member, Dan Stone, a colleague from Sangamon County. The document bears the date of the last day of Andrew Jackson's Presidency, March 3, 1837. In it Lincoln declared (for the language is his own) his belief:

1. That "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of Abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than to abate its evils."

2. That "the Congress of the United States has no power, under the Constitution, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States."

3. That "the Congress of the United States has the power, under the Constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; but that the power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of said District."

It was near the close of the same session that an act was passed removing the State capital from Vandalia to Springfield, a measure due more to the exertions of Lincoln than of any other member, even of the "Long Nine." The first capital, Kaskaskia, was convenient enough, if not quite central, for the small population



provided with a territorial government in 1809. On the admission of Illinois as a State in 1818, Vandalia, far up the Kaskaskia River, was laid out as the new seat of government. This was well to the southwest, in the heart of what has since been known as the "Egypt" of the State. But during the several years immediately preceding 1837, the center of population had gradually moved northward, as the middle and upper parts of the State were becoming more extensively settled. As usual in like cases, many rival towns were competing for the prize when the question arose as to another capital, expected to be the permanent and final one. There was of course a formidable Vandalia interest opposed to change. But after a severe and protracted contest — the battle at one time seeming to all the Springfield party except Lincoln to have been irretrievably lost — the act for removal to their locality was passed, to take effect July 4, 1839.

## CHAPTER IV.

1837-1840.

*Admitted to the Bar — Removal to Springfield — Law,  
Politics and Personalities.*

Lincoln was admitted to the bar "in the autumn of 1836." \* He began practice at Springfield as partner of Major John T. Stuart in the following spring, his residence there beginning (as he said to the writer in 1860) "on the 15th of April." Boarding with William Butler, afterward State Treasurer, he shared the lodgings of Joshua F. Speed over the store of the latter, a recent comer from Louisville. As one of the Sangamon "Long Nine," known as the longest and most efficient in removing the capital, he was cordially welcomed to the place which was ever after to be his home. While the State had made a great advance since 1830, its northern half was still but sparsely settled. Chicago was yet an unimportant if not unpromising village. Alton was eminently the ambitious town, hoping to surpass or even to supplant St. Louis. Springfield had now not more than twelve hundred inhabitants — a number soon to be largely exceeded. Its bar already included several names that were to be distinguished in the profession and in public life.

The United States District Court and the Supreme

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\*These are his own words. Mr. Herndon gives a later date.

Court of Illinois soon came to hold their sessions here, and there were annually three terms of the Common Pleas Court of Sangamon County. Circuit practice as then prevalent also occupied several weeks each year in making the rounds of the dozen other counties of the Eighth District, judges and lawyers traveling mainly by private conveyance. Roads were bad and tavern accommodations simple. The court-houses were neither sightly nor spacious. These pilgrimages had their adventures and tales, which a Chaucer might not have been tempted to idealize in rhyme, but which were not lacking in charm for the pilgrims. The arrival of court officers, attorneys, litigants, witnesses and jurors at the opening of a term was an epoch for the little village, nominal or real, in which justice had a local dwelling. Attending court was one of the chief diversions of a people having as yet neither drama, circus, menagerie, nor county fair. Of evenings and in daylight intermissions of court there were eager listeners as these errant knights interchanged stories, indulged in short, sharp debates, or bandied jokes and repartees. These were scenes which Lincoln was seldom inclined to shun. On such occasions he cast care to the winds, and might have been thought the happiest spirit of all. In his tours, however, he passed many hours or sometimes a whole day alone. Jogging along on horseback through arduous ways, made still more tedious by mud or flood, he was absorbed in meditation or profound study. Sometimes in a vehicle with one or two companions, he might seem to be rather thinking aloud than conversing, his mind wandering over a wide area, from his own obscure days and varied

fortunes to higher topics of national life and human destiny. In general, his early practice involved few weighty questions or heavy stakes, and brought him scanty fees.

Recalling his three or four years of intimate association with him, beginning in 1837, Mr. Speed said Lincoln "was a social man, though he did not seek company," adding, "after he had his home with me, on every winter's night at my store, by a big wood fire, no matter how inclement the weather, eight or ten choice spirits assembled, without distinction of party. It was a sort of social club without organization. They came there because they were sure to find Lincoln. His habit was to engage in conversation upon any and all subjects except politics."

It happened, nevertheless, that one evening, in the winter preceding the Presidential canvass of 1840, he became involved in a political argument with Douglas, then Register of the Land Office at Springfield. As the discussion grew warm, Douglas sprang to his feet and said: "Gentlemen, this is no place to talk politics; we will discuss the questions publicly with you." Not long after there was a meeting of Whigs, and a challenge to the Democrats for a joint debate between champions of the parties. This was accepted, the Democrats choosing on their part Messrs. Douglas, Lam-born, Calhoun, and Jesse B. Thomas — former Senator from Illinois, and famed for his connection with the Missouri Compromise legislation. The Whigs elected as their speakers Messrs. Logan, Baker, Browning, and Lincoln. The debate took place in the Presbyterian



church — where the Legislature held its sessions after the capital was removed until the completion of the new State House. Large audiences were present, each of the eight speakers having one night to himself. The date—January, 1840,—will sufficiently indicate the general nature of the discussion. General Harrison had already been nominated at Harrisburg for the Presidency; Van Buren's re-nomination was certain in the near future. Here, though little heard of in the wide land, was an opening cannonade — long locally famous as the "great debate" — in the remarkable campaign of the year just begun. Lincoln wrote his speech, though it was delivered without notes of any kind; and it was soon after printed, filling seven columns of the *Sangamon Journal*. The leading topic of all the speeches was Van Buren's sub-treasury method for "collecting, safe-keeping, transferring, and disbursing the revenues of the nation, as contrasted with a National Bank for the same purposes." Alleged extravagant expenditures — "gold spoons" for the White House and other incongruities in oppressively hard times — naturally found place among incidental diversions from the solid subject. Lincoln, making the closing speech of the series, was of course expected to reply to whatever he thought needed such attention in the speeches of the other side. He unhesitatingly grappled with the stoutest arguments of the Democratic champions; but a little by-play of less gravity probably gave more pleasure to the audience. One specimen will illustrate this feature of his speech:

Mr. Lamborn insists that the difference between the Van Buren party and the Whigs is, that, although the former



sometimes err in practice, they are always correct in principle, whereas the latter are wrong in principle, and, the better to impress this proposition, he uses a figurative expression in these words: "The Democrats are vulnerable in the heel, but they are sound in the heart and head." The first branch of the figure—that is, that the Democrats are vulnerable in the heel—I admit is not merely figuratively but literally true. Who that looks but for a moment at their Swartwouts, their Prices, their Harringtons, and their hundreds of others, scampering away with the public money to Texas, to Europe, and to every spot on earth where a villain may hope to find refuge from justice, can at all doubt that they are most distressingly affected in their heels with a species of "running itch"? It seems that the malady of their heels operates on the sound-headed and honest-hearted creatures very much like the cork leg in the comic song on its owner, which, when he had once started on it, the more he tried to stop it, the more it would run away. At the hazard of wearing the point threadbare, I will relate an anecdote which seems to be too strikingly in point to be omitted. A witty Irish soldier who was always boasting of his bravery when no danger was near, but who invariably retreated without orders at the first charge of the engagement, being asked by his captain why he did so, replied: "Captain, I have as brave a heart as Julius Cæsar ever had, but, somehow or other, whenever danger approaches my cowardly legs will run away with it." So with Mr. Lamborn's party. They take the public money into their hands for the most laudable purpose that wise heads and honest hearts can dictate; but, before they can possibly get it out again, their rascally vulnerable heels will run away with them.

Referring, near the close of his speech, to Mr. Lamborn's argument, founded upon the indications of recent State elections, that Van Buren was sure to be re-elected, Lincoln gave his imagination free range among bold metaphors in denunciation of the administration — "the great volcano at Washington," that was "belching forth the lava of political corruption in

a current broad and deep," by which "all may be swept away."

The probability that we may fall in the struggle [he said] ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just. It shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me dilate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its Almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world beside, and I standing up boldly, alone, hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fealty to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love. And who that thinks with me will not fearlessly adopt the oath that I take? Let none falter who thinks he is right, and we may succeed. But if, after all, we shall fail, be it so; we still shall have the proud consolation of saying to our consciences, and to the departed shade of our country's freedom, that the cause approved of our judgment and adored of our hearts, in disaster, in chains, in torture, in death, we never faltered in defending.

This was one of his first published speeches, not altogether faultless in style or in the main of much moment, yet, judged in the light of later history, there is something more than mere declamation — something almost prophetic withal — in these final sentences.

At this time he was in his third term as Representative, to which he had been chosen in 1838. While he had been gaining a living practice at the bar, he had also been growing in prominence as a political leader, so that in the organization of the House of Representatives he was the choice of the Whigs for Speaker, and received a vote but slightly less than that of his Democratic competitor.

He again served on the Finance Committee, which

had vexations enough in seeking to relieve the State from disastrous entanglements of its banking, loan and improvement system. Lincoln was not an expert financier, certainly, nor did the methods he proposed find favor with the majority, except in the first element of financial wisdom, good faith with public creditors.

He was chosen to the House of Representatives for the fourth time in 1840, and was again the candidate of the Whig minority for Speaker. Named for elector on the Harrison ticket, he spent much time in canvassing the central counties of the State especially, bearing the brunt of the Presidential battle on the Whig side, either Douglas or Calhoun being usually at hand to reply. Lincoln regarded the latter as the harder to meet. Illinois could not be wrested from the Democratic party, but the efforts made were not wasted on so helpless a cause as Lamborn's predictions implied, and Van Buren's defeat brought with it the delusive prospect of better days for the Whigs.

Douglas, then holding the comparatively lucrative position of Register of the Land Office, given him by Van Buren, continued to press forward with characteristic energy. He had already made one canvass as a Congressional candidate, and was beaten by Major Stuart (Lincoln's partner) by so close a vote that he was for some time disposed to contest the seat. A bill to abolish the Supreme and Circuit Courts of Illinois and providing a new judiciary organization — originated and lobbied for by Douglas, and alleged to have a partisan object — was passed by the Legislature, Lincoln, Baker, and thirty-three other Whig members filing their protest against it. Dan Stone and the

other Whig judges having thus been ousted, Douglas himself and other Democrats were appointed to the newly constituted bench.

As a lawyer, Lincoln was always inclined to enter heartily into the cause of one whom he believed to be wronged, yet lacking means to secure legal redress on ordinary terms. Many cases which brought him little or no pecuniary return, afforded him more than compensating satisfaction in having protected the weak against tyrannous injustice. One instance was that of a poor widow, of whose pension arrears a greedy attorney had kept quite an undue share. When her case was stated to Lincoln, he not only interested himself in her behalf, but became indignant, and secured prompt retribution without legal process or fee. He was occasionally the attorney for a negro defendant whose freedom was in question, though at the risk of prejudice to his political standing. Without resorting to the courts, he secured the release of a free negro of Illinois, who had landed from a steamer in New Orleans in violation of a local law, and was to have been sold for want of means to pay his fine. Lincoln raised the needed money, himself a contributor, choosing an immediate practical remedy without delaying justice by inflammatory talk. He was retained in a suit brought in Tazewell County in 1839 to enforce payment of a promissory note given in payment for a negro woman named Nance — a relic of the “vested rights” of certain French slaveholders before the Louisiana Purchase — the parties in court being residents of Illinois. Lincoln was counsel for the defendant; and judgment having been rendered for the plaintiff, an appeal was taken to the Illinois Supreme



Court. Before that tribunal he argued the case in 1841, maintaining that the contract was void for lack of consideration; that under the ordinance of 1789 and the Constitution of Illinois adopted in 1818, slavery had no lawful standing; and that Nance being legally a free woman, could not be the subject of a sale. His contention was sustained by the court, and the question as to slavery in Illinois was settled. \*

He sometimes defended an alleged fugitive slave, but did not refuse to act as counsel for a Kentuckian seeking to reclaim certain slaves he had voluntarily brought into Illinois for temporary employment. His client, one Matteson, of Bourbon County, had put some of his slaves at work on a farm in Coles County, Illinois. It appears that these servants would have been willing to return to Kentucky when required by their master, but for philanthropic intervention through an appeal to the local court. It can hardly be supposed that Lincoln was at all disappointed in losing his case. It is a relief, however, to have so good a proof — after all that has been told to the contrary — that he had no invincible objection to a good client with a bad cause.

At Danville, in Vermillion County, which borders on Indiana, he had a case in 1842, in which John J. Brown, his client, was the plaintiff, and Mr. Juneau, of Milwaukee, was the defendant, whose attorney was John P. Usher, twenty years later Secretary of the Interior Department. It was a complicated case, growing out of a speculative transaction. Lincoln gained the suit not only in this first trial, but afterward on appeal to

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\* Notwithstanding, it was later alleged by Douglas, in debate, that Illinois had been a slave state.



the Supreme Court. Mr. Usher, who here met him for the first time and knew him well thenceforward, said of his manner of addressing a jury, that his voice was so smooth and attractive as never to become wearisome; that in posture and gesture he was not graceful or always dignified—sometimes placing one foot in a chair, or leaning on the back of one, sometimes standing with his arms akimbo; but that he never failed of being listened to with close attention and lively interest from the beginning to the end of his argument.

During his last term in the Legislature, Lincoln was for some time in a state of serious mental depression. As told by his friend Speed:

In the winter of 1841 a gloom came over him till his friends were alarmed for his life. . . . In his deepest gloom, and when I told him he would die unless he rallied, he said: "I am not afraid, and would be more than willing. But I have an irrepressible desire to live till I can be assured that the world is a little better for my having lived in it." . . . In the early summer of 1841 Mr. Lincoln came to Kentucky and spent several months at Farmington, the home of my mother, near this city (Louisville).

He returned from this visit with restored health, and resumed his professional business in September. There was nothing really dangerous in these moods, as the event always proved—for this was neither the first nor the last of his experiences of like sort. One cause may be readily discerned by those who know the effects of such a persistent malarious influence as he had always been exposed to. He was subject to glooms of the darkest blue, but without entirely losing self-control when they were at the worst. To Mr. Speed, who was

himself given to like depressions, he later suggested that it was only necessary to bear in mind that he would soon be well again, to retain his balance, and to live down the trouble. Those who knew him best were aware that what he specially needed at such a time was genial companionship, and that nothing would more quickly and completely dispel the mists than social sunshine. Once before, in one of his darkest periods, this treatment had been successfully tried at New Salem.

Plainly, his outlook for the future was not at this time such as to inspire cheerfulness. He had been three or four years at Springfield, gaining ground, to be sure, but not receiving an ample income. Major Stuart had taken his seat in Congress, and in April (1841) their partnership was to end. It must be remembered, too, that sedentary life could not but unfavorably affect one hitherto wont to be much out of doors and to give vigorous exercise to his robust physical powers. There was otherwise a great contrast between the life led here and that almost wild freedom enjoyed in the little Salem hamlet. He had at once passed into a greatly different state of society. Now, too, he was at an age (past thirty) when to many minds the world begins to wear its most serious aspect, and when disappointment over youthful dreams unrealized quite eclipses the satisfaction of partial success and dims the light of sanguine hope.

Sensitiveness and modesty were as native to him as bold strength and courage — a seeming paradox, but a truth to be remembered in trying to comprehend a character so unique. Two significant incidents of about this date may be taken as rather an illustration than a digres-

sion. The exciting political canvass of 1840 had come to the final issue at the polls. On the line of railway then in construction, near by, there was a large gang of laborers, mostly of the "alien" class, whose right to vote had been denied, but sustained by the new Supreme Court organized under the "Douglas bill." The contractor who employed them was an ardent Democrat, and on election day it came to the ears of Lincoln that he had marched up his battalion of voters and taken possession of one of the polling places. It was not a question now whether these men should be allowed to vote; but that they should refuse honest voters access to the ballot-box was not to be borne with resignation. With true Berserker rage he hurried to the scene, faced the offenders, and — without need of blows — drove back the riotous crowd. From the statements of Mr. Speed, who gave the substance of this account from his own knowledge, it appears that Lincoln started, cudgel in hand, under an impulse to clear the way to the polls by force.

The other incident also rests on the authority of Mr. Speed. One day Lincoln, Baker, Hardin, Speed and others were riding on horseback along the road, two-and-two, some distance from Springfield. In passing a thicket of wild plum and crab apple trees, Lincoln and Hardin being in the rear, the former discovered by the roadside two young birds not old enough to fly. They had been shaken from their nest by a recent gale. "The old bird," said Mr. Speed, "was fluttering about and wailing as a mother ever does for her babes. Lincoln stopped, hitched his horse, caught the birds, hunted the nest, and placed them in it. The rest of us rode on

to a creek, and while the horses were drinking, Hardin rode up. 'Where is Lincoln?' said one. 'Oh, when I saw him last he had two little birds in his hand hunting for their nest.' In perhaps an hour he came. They laughed at him. He said, with much emphasis, 'Gentlemen, you may laugh, but I could not have slept well to-night if I had not saved those birds. Their cries would have rung in my ears.' "



## CHAPTER V.

1841.

*Mary Todd — A Broken Engagement — Depression — Visit  
to Kentucky — Letter to Miss Speed — An  
Interesting Law Case.*

It was about the year 1839 that Lincoln first met Miss Mary Todd. Born at Lexington, Kentucky, December 13, 1818, she was one of four daughters of Robert S. Todd by his first wife, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Parker. Mary was quite young at the time of her mother's death, and ere long came under the care of a stepmother. She received a good education in the higher schools of her native city, and learned to read and speak the French language in the private school of a French lady, nearly opposite the "Ashland" mansion of Henry Clay. The house of her eldest sister at Springfield, after the latter's marriage to Mr. Edwards — colleague of Lincoln in the Legislature, and son of a former United States Senator — was open to Mary and her other sisters whenever they chose to be there, rather than with their stepmother and a number of brothers and sisters of the half-blood. Mary came to live there soon after her school-days at Lexington were ended. Major Stuart was her cousin, his mother being a daughter of Levi Todd, Mary's grandfather. Her sis-

ters Frances and Anne were married in Springfield — the former to Dr. Wallace, and the other, later, to a successful merchant of that place, Mr. C. M. Smith. A young lady of unusual personal attractions and bright intellectual faculties, Mary was also of agreeable manners. She was not long without admirers, if she may not have been properly called the “ belle ” of the place. The higher and more exclusive circles of her native city to which she belonged were unsurpassed in social refinement and mental cultivation in any Southern community of the time west of the Alleghanies.

Of all her sex with whom Lincoln had become acquainted, Mary Todd was undoubtedly the one best suited to win his admiration and a more tender regard. Aside from the dissimilarity in their earlier training and position, however, there was a considerable difference in their years, he being past thirty, and she little more than twenty. At his age, an attachment of this sort is likely to be very earnest; at hers, the spirits more volatile, with any young tendency to coquetry yet undisciplined, and with maidenly ways sometimes provocative of resentment or despair in a sensitive lover. The lady was ambitious; dazzled by the glory of the great statesman to whom her father was a personal and political friend, her highest ideal of manhood was typified by the eloquent orator and expectant President. She received attentions from two persons who took a leading part, on opposite sides, in the Harrison canvass — one tall and ungainly, yet amiable, modest, kind-hearted, already noted as a speaker and aspiring to a higher position than he had been given by prolonged legislative service; the other low in stature, but strong in energy

and pluck, graceful in manner, bold, ready, and pleasing in speech, as ambitious as his rival, and deemed by his friends a more eloquent orator, though on what was to her the wrong side. She preferred the principles and habits of Lincoln to those of Douglas, as she avowed afterward; and if she was also influenced by ambition, her political intuition — famous in later life — was not now at fault. To a friend of her girlhood she wrote of her engagement, speaking plainly of the defects of her intended husband, in personal appearance especially, and adding: “But I mean to make him President of the United States. You will see that, as I always told you, I will yet be the President’s wife.”

They were to have been married on New Year’s day, 1841, but Lincoln failed to keep that engagement. Without being reasonably accounted for, his conduct was unpardonable. Months afterward it certainly was pardoned, hence it must have been somehow explained to the person who had a right to know the reason. Whether the alarming depression previously noticed as of this period began before or after the appointed wedding day — whether it was in this instance in some degree cause or effect — is not clear. Lincoln was superstitious, and that New Year’s fell on a Friday. Did that have any effect? How happened it, then, that the marriage subsequently took place on the same discredited day of the week? All that is said of the matter in his intimate correspondence with Mr. Speed reveals little more than that both these bachelors — like so many others (Thomas Carlyle, for one) — had a morbid dread or misgiving on coming directly in face of the matrimonial altar.

While absent in Kentucky during much of the summer of 1841, at the homestead of the Speed family, the invalid proved to be neither intractable nor unsusceptible to their well-advised remedies. There were outdoor activities and trips to Lexington and elsewhere; new acquaintances were made; the two old friends confided to each other their very hearts; and Lincoln was introduced to a black-eyed lady whom Speed was to marry. If the terrible depression had any relation to Ann Rutledge — as Herndon imagined — not a breath of it was lispied, as naturally would have happened, to Speed, now or ever after. To him the legend was “all new” when Herndon made the suggestion to him — so he expressly said — in 1866.

Lincoln and Speed returned to Illinois together, going by steamboat to St. Louis, and thence more directly to Springfield, where the former found business awaiting him and a tour of the circuit to be made. He was now apparently in as good spirits as ever; his company just as much sought; his talk just as entertaining. While in McLean County he wrote this letter, acknowledging the kindness received from his Farmington friends:

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., September 27, 1841.

*Miss Mary Speed, Louisville, Ky.:*

MY FRIEND:—Having resolved to write to some of your mother's family, and not having the express permission of any one of them to do so, I have had some little difficulty in determining on which to inflict the task of reading what I now feel must be a most dull and silly letter; but when I remembered that you and I were something of cronies while I was at Farmington, and that while there I was under the necessity of shutting you up in a room to prevent your com-



mitting an assault and battery upon me, I instantly decided that you should be the devoted one.

I assume that you have not heard from Joshua and myself since we left, because I think it doubtful whether he has written. You remember there was some uneasiness about Joshua's health when we left. That little indisposition of his turned out to be nothing serious, and it was pretty nearly forgotten when we reached Springfield. We got on board the steamboat Lebanon in the locks of the canal about 12 o'clock M. of the day we left, and reached St. Louis the next Monday at 8 P. M.

Nothing of interest happened during the passage, except the vexatious delays occasioned by the sandbars be thought interesting. By the way, a fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve negroes in different parts of Kentucky, and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together. A small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this fastened to the main chain by a shorter one, at a convenient distance from the others, so that the negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trot-line. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends, their fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and many of them from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery, where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless and unrelenting than any otherwhere; and yet, amid all these distressing circumstances as we would think them, they were the most cheerful and apparently happy creatures on board. One whose offense, for which he had been sold, was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually, and the others danced, sung, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true is it that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," or, in other words, that he renders the worst of human conditions tolerable, while he permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable.

To return to the narrative. When we reached Springfield, I stayed but one day, when I started on this tedious circuit, where I now am. Do you remember my going to the

city, while I was in Kentucky, to have a tooth extracted, and making a failure of it? Well, that same old tooth got to paining me so much that about a week since I had it torn out, bringing with it a bit of the jawbone, the consequence of which is that my mouth is now so sore that I can neither talk nor eat. I am literally "subsisting on savory remembrances"—that is, being unable to eat, I am living upon the remembrances of the delicious dishes of peaches and cream we used to have at your house.

When we left, Miss Fanny Henning was owing you a visit as I understand. Has she paid it yet? If she has, are you not convinced that she is one of the sweetest girls in the world? There is but one thing about her, so far as I could perceive, that I would have otherwise than it is—that is, something of a tendency to melancholy. This, let it be observed, is a misfortune, not a fault. Give her an assurance of my very highest regard when you see her. Is little Siss Eliza Davis at your house yet? If she is, kiss her "o'er and o'er again" for me.

Tell your mother that I have not got her "present" with me, but I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the blues, could one but take it according to the truth.

Give my respects to all your sisters (including Aunt Emma) and brothers. Tell Mrs. Peay, of whose happy face I shall long retain a pleasant remembrance, that I have been trying to think of a name for her homestead, but as yet can not satisfy myself with one. I shall be very happy to receive a line from you soon after you receive this; and in case you choose to favor me with one, address it to Charleston, Coles County, Ill., as I shall be there about the time to receive it.

Your sincere friend,

A. LINCOLN.

The incident of the chained groups of slaves, gently mentioned to one of a family in which slavery in its mildest form still had place, made a lasting impression on his mind. The young lady, with no recognized defect but a tendency to melancholy, was the intended wife of Mr. Speed. The "present" from the latter's

mother was an Oxford Bible, of which he made a fresh acknowledgment from the White House.

Lincoln's partnership with Major Stuart had been dissolved, and a new one with Judge Stephen T. Logan had begun on the 14th of April, 1841. About this date they were employed in a criminal case quite famous in its day—one which, with various traditional increments and distortions, has served to emphasize the uncertainties of circumstantial evidence. This is the legend as ultimately shaped in the newspaper press:

“In 1840, when the State House at Springfield, Illinois, was being built, one of the stone-cutters engaged was a man named Martin, from New York City. He was not a man of sound mind; at least, he was a maniac on one subject, which was that there was no good money except that of the old Metropolitan Bank of New York. Every Saturday night, when the men were paid off, he used to go around among them and buy up this money, often paying as high as ten per cent. premium for it. He was known to have a considerable sum of this money hid away or about him. In May of the year named he and one Smith hired a wagon to go to the Sangamon River, four miles distant. At night Smith returned, but not with Martin. When asked where Martin was, he said he did not know. Martin was soon missed; the ground where they went was searched, and the plainest evidence was presented that they had quarreled. The ground was trampled on the river bank, and some of Martin's clothes were found. It was discovered that some drops of blood were dried on the sand, and that the buggy had been drawn into the water. The supposition was



that Martin had been murdered and his body carried into the river. Search was made for days, but no body could be found. Meantime Smith, the assumed murderer, was arrested and put in the old log jail. In a few weeks the prisoner was regularly arraigned in the Circuit Court on the charge of murder. Abraham Lincoln, then rising into fame as a lawyer, was engaged for the defense. The production of the *corpus mortuum* was not insisted upon; the evidence seemed as clear and conclusive as though a dozen persons had seen the act of murder. The witnesses were few, yet what evidence there was pointed to the crime and the means by which it was done. The marks of the struggle, the clothes found there, the drops of blood on the sand, the driving of the buggy to the river, as if to throw the lifeless body into the swift current, were all circumstances that could only be accounted for in connection with the 'deep damnation of the taking off' of poor Martin. The defense could hardly make a show of evidence, and a verdict of guilty seemed a foregone conclusion. Meanwhile the sheriff of Tazewell County had read in the *Sangamon Journal* a description of Martin's person, and had heard that a man had appeared in a distant part of the county, without coat or hat, and who could give no intelligent account of himself. An inspiration prompted the sheriff to go and see him, and he became satisfied that he was the missing man. His having in his possession still a considerable amount of Metropolitan Bank money made the sheriff morally sure on the point; so he took the man in charge and started with him for Springfield. Arriving on the last day of the judicial



investigation, he lodged the man in jail and went into the court room and saw Mr. Lincoln. Then Mr. Lincoln asked a suspension of proceedings, as he had an important witness to introduce. With the sheriff he went to the old jail, saw the prisoner, and was satisfied that the dead was alive. Returning to court, Mr. Lincoln said that he could not look for anything but a verdict against his client as the case stood, but he asked permission to introduce a new and very material witness. Martin himself was placed on the stand, and in a moment the case fell to the ground."

Changing the date to the year 1841, and the fictitious names of Smith and Martin to the real ones — three brothers Traylor as the accused, and Archibald Fisher as their alleged victim — the story is true in its main effect. This professional incident has a value besides its intrinsic interest, as helping us to form a just estimate of certain statements concerning Lincoln's whereabouts and the state of his mind during the first half of this year. He wrote a clear account of this case in a letter to his friend Speed, (dated June 19, 1841,) having evidently given the affair close attention from beginning to end.\* He had not yet gone to Kentucky, but mentions in this letter his intention of doing so, as he did apparently in the latter part of June. Hence he was not "there during most of the summer and fall," as has been stated, for he was back again on the court circuit, as his letter to Mary Speed shows, before the close of September. Again, an examination of the

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\*"Complete Works" (N. & H.), I., 48-51.

House journal is sufficient to disprove the assertion of some biographers, that Lincoln, on account of great mental depression, was seldom in his seat during this winter's session of the Legislature. He was evidently as regularly present then as at any other session, or as any other member. The terrible reality of his melancholy, however, may be judged from his own words in a letter to Major Stuart, at Washington (January 23, 1841): "I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better, it appears to me."

## CHAPTER VI.

1842-1846.

*Temperance Address — Personal Difficulty with James Shields — Marriage to Mary Todd — Defeated Candidate for Congressional Nomination in 1843 — An Evening with Van Buren — Polk Defeats Clay — Annexation of Texas — War with Mexico Begun — Lincoln Elected to Congress.*

Early in 1842 Mr. Speed returned to his native State, married, and thenceforward resided on a country place near Louisville, which was again his place of business. The former chums wrote to each other freely of their personal affairs for a year or two, but the correspondence was interrupted by long intervals after 1843. During the winter (1841-2) Lincoln was quite free from "hypo" or "nervous debility," both of which terms he used to describe his ailment.

On the 22d of February he delivered an address at Springfield in aid of the "Washingtonian" temperance movement, then lately inaugurated with the special object of reforming inebriates. He treated the subject in a manner peculiarly his own — with humanity, charity, and moderation. "When the dram-seller and drinker [he said] were incessantly told, not in accents of entreaty and persuasion, diffidently addressed by erring men to an erring brother, but in the thunder

tones of anathema and denunciation, . . . that they were the authors of all the vice and misery in the land, . . . it is not wonderful that they were slow, very slow, to acknowledge the truth of such denunciations and to join the ranks of their denouncers in a hue and cry against themselves. To have expected them to do otherwise than they did . . . was to expect a reversal of human nature, which is God's decree, and can never be reversed. . . . When all such of us as have now reached the years of maturity first opened our eyes upon this stage of existence, we found intoxicating liquor recognized by everybody, used by everybody, repudiated by nobody. It commonly entered into the first draught of the infant and the last draught of the dying man. From the sideboard of the parson down to the ragged pocket of the homeless loafer, it was constantly found. Physicians prescribed it in this, that, and the other disease; government provided it for soldiers and sailors; and to have a rolling or raising, a husking or 'hoe-down' anywhere about without it was positively insufferable. So, too, it was everywhere a respectable article of manufacture and of merchandise. . . . The universal sense of mankind on any subject is an argument, or at least an influence, not easily overcome. The success of the argument in favor of the existence of an overruling Providence mainly depends upon that sense; and men ought not, in justice, to be denounced for yielding to it in any case, or giving it up slowly, especially when they are backed by interest, fixed habits, or burning appetites. . . . Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems to me



not now an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues, and I believe all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts."

Lincoln's former relations with Mary Todd, interrupted as we have seen, had not been at once renewed on his return from visiting the Speeds in Kentucky, yet the interruption was not to be permanent, as was apparent the following summer. Many an "affair of honor" has been somehow evolved from a like relationship; and such a trouble, though not after the usual course, happened in the present case. Happily, it was anything but serious in its outcome; and the same may be said of its immediate origin. Lincoln's adversary was a man afterward distinguished on the battlefield; a man of real courage as well as of considerable bluster, who was ere long to have a seat in the United States Senate. Particulars, tediously full and dull, may be found in newspaper files of the time. James Shields, born in Ireland, and now a gallant bachelor past thirty, was a member of the Illinois Legislature during Lincoln's second term, and later as State Auditor became a resident of Springfield. Certain contributions to the *Sangamon Journal* — a letter written by Lincoln, somewhat in the "Jack Downing" manner; another, over the same signature, said to have been concocted by Mary Todd and her friend, Miss Jayne (soon to be Mrs. Lyman Trumbull), and, most exasperating of all, some "lines" by Miss Todd — gave great offense to the Auditor. The editor, having been called upon by Shields' "friend," General Whiteside, turned over the responsibility to Lincoln, to whom Shields wrote, demanding "a full, positive, and absolute retraction of

all offensive allusions used" in said communications, and "an apology for the insults conveyed in them" — adding in conclusion: "This may prevent consequences which no one will regret more than myself."

Lincoln, who was at this time attending court in Tazewell County, more than fifty miles from Springfield — Shields having gone to Fremont on this personal errand — replied (Fremont, September 17, 1842): "Your note of to-day was handed me by General Whiteside. In that note you say you have been informed, through the medium of the editor of the *Journal*, that I am the author of certain articles in that paper which you deem personally abusive of you; and, without stopping to inquire whether I am really the author, or to point out what is offensive in them, you demand an unqualified retraction of all that is offensive, and then proceed to hint at consequences. Now, sir, there is in this so much assumption of facts, and so much menace as to consequences, that I can not submit to answer that note any further than I have, and to add, that the consequence to which I suppose you allude would be matter of as great regret to me as it possibly could to you."

Shields had not come so far, by such conveyance and thoroughfares as the country then afforded, without being very much in earnest. His letter was in terms that left no door ajar for explanation or disavowal, much less for retraction on the part of such a man as he had to deal with — a Kentuckian by birth, with associations largely of that type. Learning that Shields and Whiteside had started for Tazewell County, two friends of Lincoln — Dr. Merriman and Mr. Butler —

set out for the same goal, and were promptly at hand. Attempts at mediation having failed, all returned to Springfield, and a "meeting" was fixed for the 22d of the month, in Missouri, within three miles of Alton. Lincoln gave Dr. Merriman the following written statement, to be read if Shields should first withdraw his notes: "I did write the 'Lost Township' letter, which appeared in the *Journal* of the 2d inst., but had no participation in any form in any other article alluding to you. I wrote that wholly for political effect. I had no intention of injuring your personal or private character or standing as a man or a gentleman; and I did not then think, and do not now think, that that article could produce, or has produced, that effect against you; and had I anticipated such an effect, would have forborne to write it. And I will add that your conduct towards me, so far as I knew, had always been gentlemanly, and that I had no personal pique against you, and no cause for any." If no accommodation was effected, he chose for weapons "cavalry broadswords of the largest size, precisely equal in all respects, and such as now used by the cavalry company at Jacksonville."

After the prospective combatants had crossed into Missouri, other friends of both — among whom were John J. Hardin and W. L. D. Ewing — succeeded in bringing about a pacific adjustment. At this day the whole affair looks very much like an intended travesty of the code of honor in its modern development, or as a piece of waggery which might afford to the two mischievous young ladies, as well as to the humor-loving Lincoln, as much real enjoyment as they had found in the offending articles.

Abraham Lincoln was married to Mary Todd on Friday, November 4th, by Rev. Charles Dresser, D.D., rector of the Episcopal Church in Springfield. There was a large wedding party on the occasion at the residence of Mr. Ninian W. Edwards, the home of the bride. There has been some waste of words concerning the amount of romantic sentiment on either side. It may be readily granted that this union was not based on such a passion as we read of, for example, in Disraeli's *Henrietta Temple*. It is clear that there was an affinity in their ambitions; that mutual appreciation came with acquaintance; and that a more tender relation very naturally followed.

At first the wedded pair were boarders at the Globe tavern. A year or two later Lincoln bought of the Episcopal rector a plain frame house of one story, to which a second was added after a time, completing the exterior since made familiar to the world in picture. This continued to be their home thenceforward. Its next owner was the State of Illinois, in whose custody it remains as a precious memorial. Hon. Isaac N. Arnold, of Chicago, who was there as a guest at times during many years, and was better qualified to speak of their domestic life than some persons who have written about it more copiously in a less amiable spirit, said, in noticing the marriage: "With her he lived most happily until" the final separation.\* Again, at a banquet of the Illinois Bar Association in 1881, speaking of old-time hospitalities at Springfield: "Among others I recall, with a sad pleasure, the dinners given by Mrs.

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\*"Lincoln and Slavery," p. 79.



Lincoln. In her modest and simple home, where everything was so orderly and refined, there was always on the part of both host and hostess a cordial and hearty Western welcome, which put every guest perfectly at ease. Their table was famed for the excellence of many rare Kentucky dishes, and for the venison, wild turkeys, and other game, then so abundant. Yet it was her genial manner and ever-kind welcome, and Mr. Lincoln's wit and humor, anecdote and unrivaled conversation, which formed the chief attraction."

Lincoln had declined to be a candidate for re-election to the Legislature in 1842. One substantial reason is easy to find. Representatives in Congress were to be chosen the next year in Illinois, under a law that was changed at the following session of the Legislature so as to require their election, as at present, the year before they were to take their seats. It thus happened that there was a Congressional election in that State in 1843 and again in 1844. Major Stuart was not a candidate for another term. The way was thus opened for Lincoln, and it would seem that his nomination was fairly to be expected. The Sangamon district convention was called to meet in May (1843). His own county had a larger number of delegates than any other, and he had certainly well earned its support. But there was another Springfield aspirant, Edward D. Baker; and when the county convention met to choose delegates, Baker, who had a more captivating oratory, and whose supporters were active and artful, was found to be in the lead.

Writing soon after the event to a friend in Menard

County — his earlier home, which had remained faithful to him — Lincoln said he was “put down” in Sangamon “as the candidate of pride, wealth, and aristocratic family distinction” (which he thought would astonish his old friends in Menard); and that “there was, too, the strangest combination of church influence” against him: “Baker is a Campbellite; and therefore, as I suppose, with few exceptions, got all of that church. My wife has some relations in the Presbyterian churches, and some in the Episcopal churches; and therefore, wherever it would tell, I was set down as either the one or the other, while it was everywhere contended that no Christian ought to go for me, because I belonged to no church, was suspected of being a deist, and had talked about fighting a duel. With all these things Baker, of course, had nothing to do, nor do I complain of them.”

The marriage—the churches—the ridiculous “duel”! Undoubtedly the defeat was a sore disappointment.

After all, it was another candidate who got the nomination,—John J. Hardin, of Morgan County,—and in August he was elected.

Since 1840 Lincoln had given less attention to politics than to law practice. His partnership with Judge Logan—who also had Congressional aspirations—was comparatively brief, ending in 1843. A new one was formed with a younger man, whom he had known as a clerk in Mr. Speed’s store, and who had now been recently admitted to the bar, Mr. William H. Herndon, who was especially serviceable in regard to office work, the senior assuming the chief labors of the court room. Members of Congress, as we have explained, were to

be elected in 1844, but Lincoln was not now a candidate for the nomination. He gave way to his friend, Edward D. Baker, as did also Colonel Hardin. On the breaking out of the Mexican War, Hardin took the command of a regiment of volunteers. He was killed at the battle of Buena Vista. Baker was given a like command, before the close of the term for which he was elected. On returning from the war he changed his residence, and was sent to Congress from the Galena district.

Clay had a clear field this year for the Presidential nomination. The friends of ex-President Van Buren had been hoping for a like unanimity in his favor on the Democratic side. He made a tour through the West in 1843, of which Mr. Speed recalled an incident not out of place here: "In 1843, when Mr. Van Buren and Commodore Paulding visited the West, and gave out that they would reach Springfield on a certain day, but their friends knew from the condition of the roads that their expectations would not be realized, a party was formed, and Lincoln, though not of their politics, was pressed into the service. They met Van Buren and his party at Rochester, in Sangamon County, in an old barn of a hotel. Lincoln was charged to do his best to entertain the distinguished guests. Well did he do his part. Lincoln soon got under way, and kept the company convulsed with laughter till the small hours of the night. Mr. Van Buren stayed some days in Springfield, and repeatedly said he never spent so agreeable a night in his life. He complained that his sides were sore with laughter, and to more than one predicted for that young man a bright and brilliant future."

A few months before the Democratic National Convention met, a new issue had come into prominence. The annexation of Texas was thrust forward by the Tyler-Calhoun Administration in a manner to disturb political calculations as to the next Presidential canvass. No such device ever had more complete success. Deeper purposes and larger consequences were also involved. "One of the foremost," says Benton, "to give away Texas, Mr. Calhoun was the very foremost to get her back; and at an immense cost to our foreign relations and domestic peace. The immediate admission of Texas into the Union was his plan. She was at war with Mexico — we at peace; to incorporate her into the Union was to adopt her war." Formal application for the admission of Texas was made in 1838, but her war with Mexico still continued, and this war was more than even the South in general then cared to adopt. Subsequent attempts fared likewise, but the case was not suffered to drop. Some months before the Presidential nominations were to be made, in 1844, a letter adverse to annexation had been drawn from Van Buren; and Clay had been catechised with like result. Both seemed so certain to be the opposing candidates, was it not safe for both to speak out in this way and be rid of a troublesome issue? If there was an agreement between them to such effect, never were two great men worse deceived. Van Buren's pledged majority consented to the rule requiring two-thirds to nominate; James K. Polk, of Tennessee, chosen in his stead, was elected over Clay; and annexation was an accomplished fact before Polk's inauguration.

Lincoln, as he had done four years before, can-



vassed the State as one of the electoral candidates. He entered into the work with an earnest and hopeful spirit. After closing his work in Illinois, he made a brief stumping tour in Indiana. For the first time since he left the State in 1830, he visited Gentryville, and had an enthusiastic welcome from people of both parties. Still more to the purpose — if it be true, as told — a good number of those who came to hear him as Democrats went away to vote for Clay, and to remain Lincoln's political as well as personal friends ever after.

Illinois remained so decidedly Democratic that any material change in a lifetime might well seem hopeless. Douglas was elected to Congress for a second term, and had not long to wait for a seat in the Senate. A skillful politician as well as a popular orator, he took control of the Democratic organization in the State with a strong hand, and exercised the leadership with shrewdness and energy, like Van Buren in New York — managing always to make party success subservient to his own advancement.

President Polk found the situation regarding Texas and Mexico all he could have wished when he took the reins. General Zachary Taylor had been ordered to Texas with a small force of regulars; and in November (1845) he occupied Corpus Christi, beyond the river Nueces, and near its mouth. Maintaining communications by the Gulf, he was to proceed to the Rio Grande, occupying positions near the coast, and opposite Matamoros, where a Mexican force largely superior to his own was soon gathered. After vainly warning off Taylor, the Mexicans crossed the river and attacked him, suffering a serious repulse at Palo Alto and again

at Resaca de la Palma, on the 8th and 9th of May (1846). President Polk issued a proclamation declaring that war had been begun by Mexico, and calling for fifty thousand volunteers.

Elections for the next Congress were to occur this summer and autumn. General Taylor, fast becoming a popular idol, was meanwhile advancing on the farther side of the Rio Grande to Camargo, and thence up the valley of the San Juan to Monterey, which place he took by storm, against great odds, in October.

Lincoln had no great difficulty, this time, in securing the Congressional nomination in his district. As the election took place early in August, the victorious army in Mexico was only in the first stages of its career when the canvass closed. Few people in Illinois were making any great outcry against the war, or showed much concern over the possible acquisition of more territory into which the cotton-belt empire could expand.

As Lincoln's competitor, the Democrats nominated the Rev. Peter Cartwright, a popular Methodist preacher and presiding elder, who had removed from Kentucky to Illinois some years after his marriage, for the reason (as we have seen) that he did not wish to raise his children in a slave State. The canvass was made on the old political lines. As to slavery, Cartwright could hardly claim greater conservatism than Lincoln, unless by virtue of his connection with the Democratic party. The preacher had many warm friends, and would naturally find some favor in his own denomination among its Whig members. There were even attempts to gain votes for the Gospel minister by contrasting his orthodoxy with the undefined faith of

his opponent. Nevertheless, comparing the votes for member of Congress with the votes for Governor, Lincoln received four hundred more, and Cartwright over seven hundred less, than the head of their respective party tickets. Lincoln's plurality over Cartwright was 1,511, more than one thousand greater than the plurality in the district for the Whig candidate for Governor.

## CHAPTER VII.

1847-1848.

*In Congress — Mexican War Ending — Lincoln's Maiden Speech — His Second Speech — Senator Lewis Cass, the Democratic Nominee for President — Lincoln Favors the Nomination of General Taylor — The Illinois Delegates to the Whig National Convention Unanimous for Clay — Taylor's Nomination — "Free Soil" Party Nominate Van Buren and Adams.*

The Mexican War was nearly over when Lincoln (in December, 1847) took his seat in Congress. In the preceding February General Taylor had won a brilliant victory at Buena Vista. General Scott had taken the field with a separate force, moving from Vera Cruz; defeating the enemy at Cerro Gordo in April, and advancing with repeated engagements until, after storming Molino del Rey on the 8th of September, he entered the city of Mexico, where as a conqueror he remained many months, awaiting the settlement of terms of peace.

The Thirtieth Congress was an especially memorable one. The administration of President Polk, even under the pressure of a foreign war, had failed to retain its partisan strength in the House of Representatives, which chose the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, the Whig nominee, for Speaker. In both houses there



were venerable statesmen who had personally known some of "the Fathers" who organized the Government, and whose names have scarcely less luster than theirs. These honored seniors had given character to the political era which, though perhaps unconsciously to them all, was now about to close. Of the new epoch, foreshadowed in other and more striking ways, we may find one suggestion in the nature of the journey across the Alleghanies now made by Lincoln for the first time, as compared with the slow coaching of Henry Clay, Andrew Jackson, Thomas H. Benton, and their Western colleagues, for almost a lifetime, in their progress to the national capital. The eminently respectable Whigs and Democrats of the older States still looked a little downward or askance, however complacently, upon the people's representatives who came thus tediously from afar, save upon a few, of the slaveholding class more especially, who were distinguished not only by rare abilities, but also by long experience.

Among members of the House on the Whig side was the venerable ex-President John Quincy Adams, who died in the very capitol during the first session. There were also Messrs. J. R. Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania; J. M. Botts, of Virginia; Robert Toombs, A. H. Stephens, and Thomas Butler King, of Georgia; Washington Hunt, of New York; Jacob Collamer and George P. Marsh, of Vermont; Truman Smith, of Connecticut; Henry W. Hilliard, of Alabama; Samuel F. Vinton and Robert C. Schenck, of Ohio; Caleb B. Smith and Richard W. Thompson, of Indiana, and Meredith P. Gentry, of Tennessee. On the Democratic side were R. M.

McLane, of Maryland; James McDowell and R. K. Meade, of Virginia; R. B. Rhett, of South Carolina; Howell Cobb, of Georgia; Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi; Linn Boyd, of Kentucky; Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, and James S. Greene and John S. Phelps, of Missouri. Douglas had been re-elected to the House in 1846; but at the succeeding session of the Legislature he had been transferred to the Senate, and William A. Richardson had been elected as Representative in his stead. Thus it happened that the first appearance of Douglas as Senator was simultaneous with that of Lincoln as member of the House. Among the Senators were Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, John M. Clayton, Thomas Corwin, Thomas H. Benton, John Bell, Daniel S. Dickinson, Samuel S. Phelps, Simon Cameron, Hannibal Hamlin, Reverdy Johnson, Sam Houston, William R. King, R. M. T. Hunter, and Jefferson Davis.

Lincoln's maiden speech related to the President's responsibility for the beginning of the Mexican War. On the 11th of the preceding February, weeks before news came of Taylor's victory at Buena Vista, Thomas Corwin delivered his famous speech in the Senate, not only against the action of President Polk in the inception of the war, but against any appropriation in its support. In this extreme position Corwin was not generally sustained by his Whig colleagues, and the appropriations passed without much opposition. President Polk's annual message had elaborately defended his action in ordering Taylor to the Rio Grande. Mr. Richardson, of Illinois, gathering about him the mantle consigned by Douglas on ascending higher, was prompt

in moving an indorsement of the President. The gauntlet was thrown down before all who could not applaud the whole proceedings from the annexation of Texas onward. Such, in brief, was the condition of this matter when, on the 12th of January, 1848, Lincoln obtained the floor. His prepared speech was intended to fill an hour, but he spoke so rapidly that he had several minutes left at the close.

He said that some time after his colleague (Mr. Richardson) introduced the resolutions above mentioned, he (Mr. Lincoln) introduced a preamble, resolution, and interrogatories, intended to draw the President out, if possible, on this hitherto untrodden ground.

To show their relevancy, [he continued,] I propose to state my understanding of the rule for ascertaining the boundary between Texas and Mexico. It is that wherever Texas was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and wherever Mexico was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and that whatever separated the actual exercise of jurisdiction of the one from that of the other, was the true boundary between them. . . . The extent of our territory in that region depended not on any treaty-fixed boundary (for no treaty had attempted it), but on revolution. Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right — a right which, we hope and believe, is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can may revolutionize, and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit. More than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority, intermingled with or near about them, who may oppose their movements. Such minority was precisely the case of the Tories of our own Revolution. It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines, or old laws; but to break up both,



and make new ones. As to the country now in question, we bought it of France in 1803, and sold it to Spain in 1819, according to the President's statement. After this, all Mexico, including Texas, revolutionized against Spain; and still later, Texas revolutionized against Mexico. In my view, just so far as she carried her revolution by obtaining the actual, willing or unwilling submission of the people, so far the country was hers, and no further.\* . . .

The war has gone on for some twenty months; for the expenses of which, together with an inconsiderable old score, the President now claims about one-half of the Mexican territory, and that by far the better half, so far as concerns our ability to make anything out of it. It is comparatively uninhabited, so that we could establish land offices in it, and raise some money in that way. But the other half is already inhabited, as I understand it, tolerably densely for the nature of the country, and all its lands, or all that are valuable, already appropriated as private property. . . .

As to the mode of terminating the war and securing peace, the President is equally wandering and indefinite. First, it is to be done by a more vigorous prosecution of the war in the vital part of the enemy's country; and, after apparently talking himself tired on this point, the President drops down into a half despairing tone, and tells us, that "with a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes, by successive revolutions, the continued success of our arms may fail to obtain a satisfactory peace." Then he suggests the propriety of wheedling the Mexican people to desert the counsels of their own leaders, and, trusting in our protection, to set up a government from which we can secure a satisfactory peace, telling us that "this may become the only mode of obtaining such a peace!" But soon he falls into doubt of this too, and then drops back to the already half-abandoned ground of "more vigorous prosecution." All this shows that the President is in no wise satisfied with his own positions. . . .

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\*The part of this passage relating to the natural right of revolution was quoted against him fifteen years later, on the floor of the House. Hon. A. H. Stephens also claimed that this was an indorsement of Secession.



His mind, tasked beyond its power, is running hither and thither, like some tortured creature on a burning surface, finding no position on which it can settle down and be at ease. . . . He is a bewildered, confounded and miserably perplexed man. God grant he may be able to show there is not something about his conscience more painful than all his mental perplexity.

In comparison with other speeches of anti-Administration members during this and the following session, on questions immediately growing out of the Mexican War, his position may well be pronounced moderate. Of slavery as a motive for the war, not a word is spoken. At one point, indeed, a hint of this kind seems almost to have been on his tongue, only to vanish inarticulate.

There was no lack of listeners to the new orator from the West; no one could fail to discern something above the common in his treatment of the matter in hand; yet the speech was not electrifying; it was not of the kind by which a reputation is "made at once." In Illinois there were even some mutterings among his Whig constituents, as if such a redoubtable fact as the Mexican War should have been simply glorified or quietly let alone.

In the Illinois Legislature Lincoln had favored internal improvements on a liberal scale at the expense of the State. As intimated to a friend, he thought the glory of a DeWitt Clinton worthy of his ambition. But the financial crash of 1837 put an end to such hopes. In regard to public works of a national character, he was still an ardent follower of Henry Clay. Lincoln made this the subject of a speech in Congress on the 20th of June.

In the preceding year a convention had been held

at Chicago, in which the Western States in general were represented, to add the force of a commanding public expression in favor of needed improvements by the Federal Government, to facilitate navigation on the great rivers and lakes. The convention met on the 5th of July, 1847, and its sessions extended through the two following days. It was presided over by Judge Edward Bates, of St. Louis, whose opening speech was greatly admired at the time, and talked of long afterward as a rare specimen of eloquence. Among the other distinguished speakers was Thomas Corwin, then in his best days, who had no superior in popular oratory. One of the distinguished Western men who notably did not attend this "River and Harbor Convention," so-called, was Senator Lewis Cass, whose residence at Detroit seemed to make his presence and countenance, as a man who had been so long in public life, almost imperative.

Mr. Cass was nominated for the Presidency by the Democratic National Convention which met at Baltimore on the 22d day of May, 1848. Soon after his nomination, being at the city of Cleveland, he had been called out, and was making thankful response to his friends, when one in the crowd asked an expression in regard to river and harbor improvements. Cass replied that the "noise and confusion" would prevent his making himself understood. It was after this last incident that Lincoln spoke on the general subject in the House. President Polk, early in the session, had vetoed a bill making appropriations for the improvement of rivers and harbors. The Baltimore convention which nominated Mr. Cass had declared in its plat-

form against the constitutional power of the Government "to commence and carry on a general system of internal improvements," and the nominee, in his letter of acceptance, had indorsed the platform without reservation. Citing these facts at the outset, and concluding from them that the question of such improvements was "verging to a final crisis," Lincoln said the friends of the policy "must now battle, and battle manfully, or surrender all." The entire speech is of more than transient value, sustaining the prevalent policy of the Government on the subject from that day to the present.

A treaty with Mexico, unofficially arranged at Guadalupe Hidalgo in February (1848), was, after considerable delay, ratified by both governments as a final pacification, and General Scott left the Mexican capital in June. Not only was the Rio Grande conceded as the international boundary — a natural and fitting one, — but also that great domain on the Pacific, California, and what was called New Mexico, partly included now in Utah and Arizona — all confirmed by treaty stipulation, be it as indemnity, purchase, or conquest, or all these combined. Such a consummation, had nothing more serious been involved than the cost of the war and the comparatively trivial amount of purchase money, would have been brilliant enough to dazzle a glory-loving people.

There was, however, a darker side, which had already disclosed itself in the deliberations of the preceding Congress. President Polk had asked a grant of two million dollars to be used in negotiation. The acquisition of Mexican territory was understood to be in contemplation. That Congress was strongly Democratic in

both houses. Could the President for a moment doubt that a request so moderate in terms would be readily granted? Quite unexpectedly, a Democratic member from Pennsylvania, David Wilmot by name, proposed to limit the grant with a proviso that (using the terms of the Ordinance of 1787 organizing the Northwestern Territory) neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, should ever be permitted in any territory acquired from Mexico. This was the Wilmot Proviso, long to be remembered. From the Calhoun party, on the mere motion, there was a great outbreak of wrath. When a majority of the House, in February, 1847, actually voted for this proviso, the storm passed all bounds. Three years before, Benton said in secret session of the Senate, as he himself tells us, in opposing Calhoun's treaty for the annexation of Texas: "Disunion is at the bottom, and I denounce it to the American people. Under the pretext of getting Texas into the Union, the scheme is to get the South out of it." As to the noise made over the Wilmot Proviso, Benton, writing half a dozen years after the event, was equally explicit. He avers that Calhoun really "hugged" the proviso "as a means of 'forcing the issue' between the North and the South." For two years, he adds, the Wilmot Proviso "convulsed the Union."

The Senate rejected the proviso, and the Two Million bill fell in the fight. The question remained as an inheritance to the Thirtieth Congress, and had lost nothing of its significance after an immense territorial area had been positively acquired under the ratified treaty with Mexico. In whatever form the principle came before the House for action while he was a



member, it was sustained by the vote of Abraham Lincoln.

Senator Cass, to make himself more agreeable to the South, had written a letter which many Northern Democrats thought too obsequious, wishing in particular to remove the impression created by a vote of his, that he favored legislation for "freedom in the territories." A large number of Democrats in New York and Ohio, especially, were tending toward aggregation into a separate "free soil" wing. Ex-President Van Buren and his close friends were known to have retained some resentment for the manner in which he was defeated in the national convention of 1844. Much discontent in the party at once manifested itself on the nomination of Mr. Cass, and as weeks wore on, this discontent rather increased than diminished. Another hopeful opportunity was presented for the Whigs. But was it possible for that party in the present state of affairs to be thoroughly united, North and South, on a Presidential ticket?

The Whig National Convention met at Philadelphia on the 8th of June. Mr. Clay had consented to accept another nomination, if tendered him, and active exertions had been made for several months to accomplish that object. There had early been much talk of nominating General Taylor as a more expedient move, and after the battle of Buena Vista the scheme had assumed strong proportions. General Scott was preferred by others. Daniel Webster had strong adherents, but few farther west or south than New York. Before the convention the choice was substantially narrowed down to Clay or Taylor.

Lincoln was one of a group of members, including Mr. Stephens and others from the South, who actively urged the nomination of General Taylor. It was not a distinctively Southern movement. One of the earliest and most influential workers in this cause was Thurlow Weed, the political adjutant of Mr. Seward (not as yet a Senator) at Albany. Lincoln wrote letters to a number of personal friends in Illinois, seeking to bring them over to his side. It has been continually asserted that he was himself a member of the Philadelphia convention, but such was not the fact. He neither led nor followed the sentiment of his own State, which sent a delegation united and unchangeable in their support of Clay. They did not see fit even to appoint Lincoln to a vacancy, though there happened to be two. He was at Philadelphia during the convention, however, and made his presence felt.\*

There was much discontent among Northern Whigs in several States over the nomination of Taylor. Part of the Massachusetts delegation openly protested, and withdrew from the convention before the ticket was completed, with the name of Millard Fillmore for Vice-President. Whig and Democratic malcontents, uniting with the "Liberty" men who had voted for Mr. Birney in 1844, held a convention a little later at Buffalo, and nominated Martin Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams. One of the leading spirits of the convention

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\*The delegates were Isaac Vandeventer, S. Lisle Smith, James W. Singleton, Churchill Coffing, M. P. Sweet, N. G. Wilcox, Ezra Baker, R. H. Allison, J. B. Herrick. The main facts in the case were furnished to the writer in 1866, by Colonel Wilcox, one of the delegates, and a paymaster in the army, appointed by Lincoln. See also "Complete Works" (N. & H.), I., 155.

was Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, to whom was largely attributed the shaping of the platform, and especially its noted phrase, "freedom national, slavery sectional." It soon appeared that a large segment of the Democratic party in New York and of the Whig party in Massachusetts, with many from both parties in Ohio and other States, would support this "Free Soil" ticket.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1848-1849.

*In Congress — Speeches in New England — Meets Mr. Seward in Boston — Fails to Receive a Federal Appointment — Whig Candidate for Senator.*

Congress, remaining in session until nearly the end of summer, gave much of its time to what were properly "campaign speeches." In this vein Lincoln addressed the House on the 27th of July. "Our Democratic friends," he began, "seem to be in great distress because they think our candidate for the Presidency doesn't suit us;" then proceeded to vindicate the position of General Taylor and to assail that of General Cass, with much banter on the latter's war record; and turned the tables on his opponents, who accused the Whigs of thrusting aside a veteran leader to take up a military hero. It was one of the best examples of the Western stump oratory of that day, though still susceptible of improvement.

In this speech occurs, in an incidental way, the most explicit expression given by him in Congress concerning the cardinal principle of the new Republican party, as yet neither formed nor foreseen. After saying he did not certainly know what General Taylor "would do as to the Wilmot Proviso," he added: "I am a Northern man, or, rather, a Western free-State man, with a



constituency I believe to be, and with personal feelings I know to be, against the extension of slavery. As such, and with what information I have, I hope and believe General Taylor, if elected, would not veto the proviso; but I do not know it. Yet, if I knew he would, I still would vote for him. I should do so, because, in my judgment, his election alone can defeat General Cass; and because, should slavery thereby go into the territory we now have, just so much will certainly happen by the election of Cass; and, in addition, a course of policy leading to new wars, new acquisitions of territory, and still further extensions of slavery.” . . .

Farther on he said, in regard to the Mexican War: “But as General Taylor is, *par excellence*, the hero of the Mexican War, and as you Democrats say we Whigs have always opposed the war, you think it must be very awkward and embarrassing for us to go for General Taylor. The declaration that we have always opposed the war is true or false, according as one may understand the term ‘opposing the war.’ If to say ‘the war was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President’ be opposing the war, then the Whigs have very generally opposed it. . . . But if, when the war had begun, and had become the cause of the country, the giving of our money and our blood, in common with yours, was support of the war, then it is not true that we have always opposed the war. With few individual exceptions, you have constantly had our votes here for all the necessary supplies. And, more than this, you have had the services, the blood and the lives of our political brethren in every trial, and on every field. . . . Clay and Webster each gave a son, never

to be returned. From the State of my own residence, besides other worthy but less known Whig names, we sent Marshall, Morrison, Baker, and Hardin; they all fought, and one fell, and in the fall of that one we lost our best Whig man. . . . In speaking of this, I mean no odious comparison between the lion-hearted Whigs and Democrats who fought there. . . . I think of all those brave men as Americans, in whose proud fame, as an American, I, too, have a share. Many of them, Whigs and Democrats, are my constituents and personal friends; and I thank them — more than thank them — one and all, for the high, imperishable honor they have conferred on our common State.”

This third and last of his “set speeches” in Congress was listened to with an interest often intense, and its sarcastic passages provoked repeated outbursts of laughter. Such is the testimony of one who was present on this occasion (Mr. C. H. Brainerd), and who has supplied these additional particulars:

The seats in the old Hall of Representatives were arranged in a semi-circle, and divided by narrow aisles, radiating like the spokes of a wheel, from the area which was occupied by the Clerk’s desk and the Speaker’s chair. Mr. Lincoln’s seat was on the outer range, near the western entrance of the hall. His speech was carefully written out on sheets of foolscap paper, and lay before him on his desk. After speaking a few minutes he abandoned his notes and trusted to his memory or the inspiration of the moment. Becoming excited, he commenced walking down the aisle, his right arm extended, and his long, bony forefinger pointing toward the Democratic side of the hall. His left arm was behind him, and supported the skirts of his black dress coat. He seemed almost unconscious of his movement until he

crossed the area, and stood face to face with the members of the opposite side, when he would turn and, quickly walking back to his seat, glance at his manuscript, and then resume his walk. He thus occupied his hour.

In February, John Quincy Adams, a familiar figure in the House for many weeks after Lincoln first took his seat there, had fallen paralyzed in his presence, soon to see "the last of earth." The Illinois Whig member, to whom the ex-President had been an object of political adoration and a source of inspiration perhaps second only to Henry Clay, was appropriately selected as one of the Congressional delegation to accompany the remains of Adams to their burial place in Massachusetts, directly after the summer adjournment (August 14). It is not strange that after his mission to Quincy was accomplished, he tarried many days in the State. There were national as well as personal reasons for this detention. It was a critical year in politics. A son of the lately deceased ex-President, named for Vice-President by the Van Buren Free Soil party, was expected to withdraw from General Taylor a large share of the anti-slavery Whigs of Massachusetts.

Henry Wilson and his fellow-seceders from the Philadelphia Convention when Clay was beaten, were working with might and main in the confident hope of carrying the State for Van Buren and Adams. Charles Sumner, after years of quietude, with a leaning towards the non-resistance and non-voting abolitionism of Garrison and Phillips, was now beginning to take hold of politics. The year before Sumner had been disposed to urge that Thomas Corwin be taken as the Whig candidate for President, after that Senator's famous Mexi-

can war speech. By nature and training, one would then have supposed Sumner a predestined Whig of the true Boston type, if he were to meddle with politics at all. He seemed, indeed, not to have been constructed for a politician. In his noted Fourth-of-July oration (1845), on "The Grandeur of Nations," he denounced war and warriors, and deprecated all preparations for war, even militia organization. "Military chieftains" he could not abide, and so fixed his choice on Van Buren in preference to Taylor or Cass. Even Daniel Webster had said the Whig nomination was one "not fit to be made." It was very late in the canvass before he came to the support of his party in a Faneuil Hall speech against Van Buren and the Buffalo platform rather than in favor of Taylor. Horace Greeley, whose *Tribune* had a New England constituency, almost missed coming out for Taylor and Fillmore, but ran up that banner at the last moment, after their election was deemed sure. Altogether, certainly, the prospect was far from pleasing to Massachusetts Whigs when they gathered at Worcester for their State convention, held on the 13th of September.

That city was the very headquarters of the Free Soil revolt; but it had been the wonted place for State conventions, and it was best to beard the lion in his den. Two orators from a distance were invited to speak on the evening of the 12th, Abraham Lincoln and Leslie Coombs, the latter the neighbor and personal friend of Henry Clay. The former was claimed by the chairman, who introduced him as "one of our Lincolns." Contemporary press reports — only a summary, as usual in those days — indicate that his speech included in sub-



stance a good share of the most telling passages of his 27th of July speech in the House, and the main arguments of his earlier one on the Mexican War. The principal new matter seems to have been in relation to the extension of slavery. As Webster did later, Lincoln argued that the Whigs were as positive as the Free Soilers, and more practical than they, in supporting free soil; that opponents of slavery would gain nothing and lose much in helping to defeat the Whig candidate and to elect Cass. It was called a "truly masterly and convincing" speech; and at its close "the audience gave three enthusiastic cheers for Illinois, and three more for the eloquent Whig member from that State." Another contemporary account represents it as "one of the best speeches ever heard in Worcester," and of good effect in reclaiming errant Whigs. It made Lincoln personally known to a great number of people from all parts of the State. He was much in request thereafter as a speaker, and several invitations were accepted during the next ten days. He spoke at New Bedford, Dedham, Dorchester, Cambridge, Lowell, and other places; and more notably in Boston, at Tremont Temple, on the evening of September 22d, on the same platform with Governor William H. Seward, who preceded him.

This was almost certainly the first time these two speakers ever met. Seward had as yet seen no Congressional service, though he had twice been elected Governor of New York. In the February following (1849) he was elected to the United States Senate. He was not altogether a pleasing speaker as to voice or manner, though he commanded close attention by the matter which he presented with finished rhetoric. He

was, of course, much more radical in those days as to slavery than Lincoln, and in Northern Ohio, later in the canvass, used such extreme expressions in endeavoring to stay the defection of anti-slavery Whigs as to have a reactionary effect in other directions. Massachusetts voted for General Taylor, but Ohio did not. Many years after their later association in more important affairs was ended, it was told, no doubt on the authority of Mr. Seward, that in conversing together on that evening in Boston when the speaking was over, Lincoln remarked: "I have been thinking over what you have said. I reckon you're right. We have got to deal with this slavery question, and got to give much more attention to it hereafter than we have been doing." \* If his activity was quickened or his purpose modified by what he heard that night, Lincoln's opinions were not materially changed. This may be seen from his own words before and after.

He called upon Thurlow Weed at Albany, on the way homeward from Boston — as appears from the latter's recollections — and they together had an interview with Millard Fillmore, the candidate for Vice-President. He was gaining acquaintance with the chiefs of both wings of the Whig party in New York.

The few weeks of the campaign remaining after his return home were chiefly devoted to the canvass in Illinois. In his own district Judge Stephen T. Logan, the Whig nominee for Representative in Congress, was beaten; but the majority for General Taylor was over

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\* E. L. Pierce's "Life of Sumner." See also "Life of W. H. Seward" (F. W. S.), II., 80.

fifteen hundred—slightly less than Lincoln had received at his election two years before.

The defection from the Democratic party in New York, in which Van Buren had a large vote, gave that State to Taylor, as the "Liberty" vote four years previously had given it to Polk; and in both cases the large electoral vote of the Empire State was decisive of the general result. Zachary Taylor and Lewis Cass carried each an equal number of States—fifteen—Taylor having one hundred and sixty-three and Cass one hundred and twenty-seven electoral votes.

The second session of the Thirtieth Congress, coming between the election and the inauguration of a new President, would no doubt have been a very quiet one but for the territorial acquisition from Mexico. An older controversy that had been languishing was now revived. If Congress really had exclusive and complete jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, why should it longer tolerate slavery there? Why should the sale of slaves, as a regular market business, be permitted to go on almost under the windows of the Capitol?

Where Lincoln's sympathies were, as to these latter matters, may be clearly seen from his action on the territorial question. There were to his mind, however, practical difficulties in the one case that did not exist in the other. Whatever his reasons, he now stood in the same position as when he wrote his "protest" in 1837. When Mr. Palfrey, of Massachusetts, sought to introduce a bill "to repeal all acts, or parts of acts, of Congress, establishing or maintaining slavery or the slave trade in the District of Columbia," and Mr. Holmes, of South Carolina, objected, under the rules,

Lincoln was one of the few Northern men who voted against granting the leave asked. His colleague, Mr. Wentworth, from the Chicago district, and one or two other Northern Democrats, voted in favor of Mr. Palfrey's request. Mr. Vinton, of Ohio, and Mr. Dunn, of Indiana, among Northern Whigs, voted with Lincoln on the side of the united South. The negative majority was altogether but thirteen.

On the 21st of December, Mr. Gott, of New York, introduced a resolution, with a preamble declaring that the "traffic now prosecuted in this metropolis of the Republic in human beings, as chattels, is contrary to national justice and the fundamental principles of our political system, and is notoriously a reproach to our country throughout Christendom, and a serious hindrance to the progress of republican liberty among the nations of the earth;" — the resolution instructing the District Committee "to report a bill, as soon as practicable, prohibiting the trade in said District."

Lincoln and three other Northern Whigs — Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, and Dunn and Thompson, of Indiana — voted with the South, to lay the resolution on the table. A reconsideration having been moved, the subject was postponed until the 10th of January, and on that day Lincoln read a proposed substitute, in the form of a bill, providing that no person not already within the District should be held in slavery therein, and prescribing a process of gradual emancipation there, with compensation to owners voluntarily freeing their slaves; the measure, however, to be conditioned on the assent of the people of the District, by a majority vote, at a special election. The bill also made an excep-



tion, allowing citizens of slaveholding States coming into the District on public business to "be attended into and out of said District, and while there, by the necessary servants of themselves and their families," and recognized the right to reclaim fugitive slaves therein as in free territory elsewhere. Lincoln said he was authorized to state that of about fifteen of the leading citizens of the District to whom this plan had been submitted, there was no one who did not approve of the adoption of such a proposition. The bill, however, received no further attention. With the close of the short session, March 3, 1849, his Congressional service came to an end.

Since the Presidency of Jackson, a division of spoils had been expected to follow a party triumph. Lincoln having labored with more than his usual zeal for the nomination as well as the election of the new President, ought not the retiring Congressman to be offered a valuable place under the Government? No such offer came. He generously urged that a place in the Cabinet should be given to Colonel Edward D. Baker, but no office of that magnitude was wont to be flung so far West. Even so late as 1860 the highest Federal office distributed in Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, or States more remote, was that of Commissioner of the General Land Office, which had been successively held by some of the foremost men in Ohio and Indiana.\* General James

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\*Judge John McLean, after serving two terms in Congress, and some years on the Supreme Bench of Ohio, was appointed Commissioner of the General Land Office in 1822, and next year Postmaster General.

Shields, who held the place when the Mexican War began, had been succeeded as Commissioner by Richard M. Young, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Illinois. The Whig members of the Illinois Legislature and some other prominent men of the State had united in recommending Mr. Browning, of Quincy, to be Judge Young's successor. After mature reflection, Browning declined to have his name presented to the President. Then testimonials were prepared for Cyrus Edwards, a constituent of Lincoln, who added his own indorsement. A formidable competitor soon appeared in the person of Justin Butterfield, a prominent lawyer of Chicago, who had failed to get the coveted place of Solicitor of the Treasury. He had been a champion of Mr. Clay, and strongly opposed to the nomination of General Taylor, which no doubt brought him valuable support from the former's friends, and he secured the favor of the Secretary of the Interior, Hon. Thomas Ewing.

Butterfield was not a favorite among the Whigs of the State in general, and with the approval of Edwards, who was sure to be beaten, Lincoln became a candidate. About the middle of June two Illinois friends of Lincoln — Colonel Greene Wilcox and Josiah M. Lucas — waited on the President, hoping that he might be influenced to another decision than that which the Chicago applicant was confidently expecting. This embassy met a gracious reception at the White House; but it was soon discovered only too plainly that the blunt General had already made up his mind, and was not disposed to assume any disguise in talking of the matter. In answer to a mild inquiry, he said it was true

that he intended to displace Judge Young. Thereupon, after reminding the President that Abraham Lincoln was a candidate for the succession, Colonel Wilcox said the gentleman was on his way to Washington, and had telegraphed from Dayton, Ohio, that he would be here as soon as possible; and expressed the hope that final action in the case would be delayed until Lincoln's arrival. This was promised.

In due course of railway trains Lincoln appeared, but the case was really no longer open. The chief interest in the matter now lies in the following memorandum (copied by the writer from the original in Lincoln's handwriting), addressed to President Taylor:

Nothing in my papers questions Mr. B.'s competency or honesty, and, I presume, nothing in his questions mine. Being equal so far, if it does not appear I am preferred by the Whigs of Illinois, I lay no claim to the office.

But if it does appear I am preferred, it will be argued that the whole Northwest, and not Illinois alone, should be heard. I answer I am strongly recommended by Ohio and Indiana, as well as Illinois; and further, that when the many appointments were made for Ohio, as for the Northwest, Illinois was not consulted. When an Indianian was nominated for Governor of Minnesota, and another appointed for Commissioner of Mexican Claims, as for the Northwest, Illinois was not consulted. When a citizen of Iowa was appointed Second Assistant Postmaster General and another to a Land Office in Minnesota, Illinois was not consulted. Of none of these have I ever complained. In each of them, the State whose citizen was appointed was allowed to control, and I think rightly. I only ask that Illinois be not cut off with less deference.

It will also be argued that all the Illinois appointments, so far, have been South, and that therefore this should go North. I answer, that of the local appointments every part has had its share, and Chicago far the best share of any. Of the transitory, the Marshal and Attorney are all; and



neither of these is within a hundred miles of me, the former being South and the latter North of West. I am in the center. Is the center nothing?—that center which alone has ever given you a Whig representative? On the score of locality, I admit the claim of the North is no worse, and I deny that it is any better than that of the center.

Lincoln's peculiar skill in making the facts of a case their own argument has no better example than in this paper (never before printed). It was conclusive on the points he understood to be in issue. There was, however, another difficulty not then so well known as afterward. Taylor permitted his Cabinet to decide his appointments — contrary to Executive usage twelve years later. Under that policy, Cabinet officers mutually sustained one another, securing to each the control of offices in his own department. Secretary Ewing had promised the place in question; the case was referred to the Cabinet, and Ewing kept his word.

Mr. Lincoln wrote to a friend at Springfield, [said Colonel Wilcox to the writer,] that "nothing but Ewing's promise saved Butterfield." A day or two after, he was walking in his room, and speaking of his pecuniary circumstances he paused and looking up to the ceiling said to a friend: "I am worth about three thousand dollars; I have a little property and owe no debts; it is perhaps well that I did not get this appointment. I will go home and resume my practice, at which I can make a living — and perhaps some day the people may have use for me." . . . He called on Mr. Ewing at the Department for the purpose of withdrawing his papers, when the Secretary remarked that if Mr. Lincoln had applied when the administration came in he should have had the office. The latter replied that if Mr. Ewing would reduce that statement to writing he would be satisfied, and the Secretary thereupon gave him a letter to that effect.



It is commonly reported unto this day that the Governorship of Oregon was offered to Lincoln afterward, and declined on account of Mrs. Lincoln's disinclination to such banishment. This would imply that the Administration volunteered what was deemed a recompense for a previous disappointment. Lincoln made no complaint, asked nothing else, and the plain truth must be told that the only place offered him, so far as the files of the State Department show, was one he could not with due self-respect accept. In the writer's possession are two copies of commissions of the same date, certified under the seal of the department — issued August 9, 1849, and returned to the files with the indorsement "Declined" — one to Hon. Joseph G. Marshall, of Indiana, as Governor of the Territory of Oregon, and the other to Hon. Abraham Lincoln as *Secretary* of that Territory.

A United States Senator was to be chosen at the next session of the Illinois Legislature, but a Whig majority in that body was not among the possibilities of the time. Lincoln was voted for by the Whig members for that office when the election came off, while the more effective vote of the Democratic majority was given to General James Shields, who had resigned his place as Commissioner of the General Land Office to go to the war, had been shot through the body on a Mexican battlefield, and had come back a military hero. who could easily distance all political competitors.

## CHAPTER IX.

1849-1855.

*Professional Work and Ways—Home and Family—Eulogy  
on Henry Clay—Law Cases.*

Late in the forties Chicago was a small but hopeful city, claiming fifteen thousand inhabitants, and assuring the world that it was "rapidly growing." On returning from Congress Lincoln was offered a promising partnership there, which he declined, and contentedly resumed the practice which his young associate had kept alive. With this he was to be chiefly concerned for the next five years. He sensitively watched, in silence and distance, the great political turmoil at Washington; the inaugurated movements for secession in the Cotton States; the increasing intensity of anti-slavery feeling in the North; the new compromise struggling into life; and the lull which came at length, as if everybody had wearied of this sad business and wanted solid repose. He made a few campaign speeches for Winfield Scott in 1852, but the ill-starred party was in a mortal decline.

His winter attendance on the Federal courts at Springfield began in December, before Justice John McLean, of the Supreme, and Judge Nathaniel Pope, of the District Court. McLean was a courtly gentleman, whose home was in a hill suburb (now part) of

Cincinnati. When still a very young man he was Postmaster-General under President Monroe, and with William Wirt, Attorney-General, remained in office through the term of President Adams. Unwilling to aid President Jackson in his methods of civil service reform, McLean was honorably relieved by promotion to the Supreme Bench, and only lacked the Presidency to fill the full measure of his ambition. Judge Pope was a son of Senator John Pope, of Kentucky, and as the Territorial delegate when Illinois was admitted as a State had secured a large extension of its area — all that part north of a line running due west from the southern point of Lake Michigan. Before these two Judges Lincoln met many distinguished lawyers, and was employed in cases that taxed his best powers. The county courts of the Eighth District — presided over, after 1848, by Judge David Davis, an intimate friend of Lincoln, and afterward so well known to the nation — sat at Springfield in March, July and November, and in its other counties there were only two tours, one beginning in April and the other in September. Excepting special calls that occasionally took him to other counties, it will thus appear that the time of his absence from home was less than some have alleged.

His superiority as a jury advocate was early recognized. Without broad and thorough learning in the law, he had a mind quick to grasp and firm to hold the combined facts and principles of a case, an aptness and lucidity of statement, and a rare power of close and exhaustive analysis. He had a candid and comprehensive way of viewing both sides of a question, and thereby reaching honest conclusions. This was one of his pecu-

liar qualities on the stump as well as at the bar. He had so strong a bias for the right for its own sake as to be embarrassed in any attempt to make the worse appear the better cause. More than once he was so scrupulous, not to say singular, in this respect as to astonish some of his professional associates. The trait, however, must not be so exaggerated or misconstrued as to imply that he assumed infallibility in determining the right side; or that he was less conscious than others of the uncertainties of fact as well as of law; or that he had an undue sense of accountability for an unjust result of a trial in which he took part. Nor can it be true that he would decline to aid in saving a known offender from the infliction of an excessive penalty, or in protecting a litigant, who was really in the wrong, from an oppressive verdict.

Believing in the supremacy of law over mere individual will, wish or interest, he was not disposed to regard his own conceptions of a higher than human law as a valid substitute for legislative authority. Yet the first-hand conclusions of reason, moral judgment and common sense in administering the law — and what better origin has precedent itself? — were undoubtedly sometimes sufficient to his mind without further support. When he found a bewildering contradiction of precedents, he did not care to juggle with citations. He had little patience with sophisms. He thought his own process of reaching an honest conclusion, presented clearly, was his best method for convincing the mind of another. In this spirit he was wont to speak, whether addressing judge, jury, or people.

After his admission to the bar he never dabbled in



farming, trading, or speculating. Besides his city homestead, he owned no real estate except a lot presented to him in the town of Lincoln (Illinois) — named in his honor — and a quarter section of bounty land granted him for service in the Black Hawk War. The latter property he neither sold nor improved. He was moderate in his professional charges, and indulgent as to any return from a client who was poor. He did not, consequently, accumulate money rapidly, although he came to have practice enough to make him affluent had he dealt a little more rigidly. He had, in fact, no craving for great wealth, even as an aid to political ambition. The golden lever was not in his day the power most relied upon in politics, nor was it one he would have ever cared to use.

He was regarded by District Judge Drummond, of Chicago, a political opponent, as one of the most successful lawyers that Illinois ever had, and as not more powerful before a jury than with the court. Judge David Davis, holding the same opinion, pronounced Lincoln “the fairest and most accommodating of practitioners”; while, hating as he did oppression and knavery, “many a man whose fraudulent conduct was undergoing a review in a court of justice has writhed under his terrific indignation and rebuke.” A witness believed unscrupulous would be dealt with in the same unsparing manner. Few of his professional contemporaries during his more active practice had as large a number of cases before the Supreme Court of Illinois as Lincoln.

During the sessions of the Legislature and the courts, Mrs. Lincoln in these years was wont to give

occasional dinners and evening parties. As a hostess she was gracious and affable as well as liberal; perhaps no one in the city who entertained was more generally popular than she. While her father lived (his death occurred in 1849) there were visits with her husband to Lexington, Kentucky,\* where she had a number of brothers and sisters of the half-blood. When there Lincoln would naturally call on Henry Clay if he was at the time at Ashland. One such visit, perhaps it was the only one, has been mentioned as chilling the hero-worshiper's devotion, if not effecting a complete disillusion. But this is clearly an extravagant over-statement, if it has any basis at all. There may have been an unexpected distance in Clay's manner, and not as many stories were told, we may be sure, as at the meeting with Van Buren on the prairies in 1843; yet Lincoln was to the last an admirer of the great orator and conciliator who was his earliest political master.

At the time of his election to Congress, Robert and Edward were his only children — the former born August 1, 1843, the latter March 10, 1846. His family were with him during part of his term at Washington. "Eddie" died February 1, 1850, and William was born the 21st of December following. The youngest child, born April 4, 1853, was given the name of his deceased grandfather, Thomas, though in childhood more commonly called "Tad." Of their domestic life, according to Mr. W. H. Herndon,† Mrs. Lincoln said (in 1865): "Mr. Lincoln was the kindest man and most

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\*See "Complete Works" (N. & H.), I, 577.

†In *Springfield Register*, January 14, 1874.

loving husband and father in the world. He gave us all unbounded liberty. . . . He was exceedingly indulgent to his children. . . . He was a terribly firm man when he set his foot down. None of us — no man or woman — could rule him after he had made up his mind.”

Thomas Lincoln, the father, died on the 15th of January, 1851, at Farmington, in Coles County, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Thomas Goodwin, Campbellite, of Charleston, in that county, who said in 1887, not long before his own death: “In his case I could not say aught but good. He was a consistent member through life of the church of my choice — the Christian Church, or Church of Christ; and was, as far as I know — and I was a very intimate friend — illiterate, yet always truthful, conscientious, and religious.”

The eulogy on Henry Clay pronounced by Lincoln in July, 1852, at Springfield, was not regarded as one of his best efforts, yet at this distance in time parts of it afford glimpses of self-revelation and are otherwise of particular interest. He said that “Mr. Clay’s eloquence did not consist, as many fine specimens of eloquence do, of tropes and figures, of antithesis and elegant arrangement of words and sentences, but rather of that deeply earnest and impassioned tone and manner which can proceed only from great sincerity and a thorough conviction in the speaker of the justice and importance of his cause. This it is that truly touches the chords of sympathy; and those who heard Mr. Clay never failed to be moved by it, or ever afterward forgot the impres-

sion. All his efforts were made for practical effect. He never spoke merely to be heard. He never delivered a Fourth-of-July oration, or a eulogy on an occasion like this." Clay's ruling passion he declared to be a love of liberty and right for their own sakes, and continued:

He ever was on principle and in feeling opposed to slavery. The very earliest, and one of the latest, public efforts of his life, separated by a period of more than fifty years, were both made in favor of gradual emancipation. He did not perceive that on a question of human right the negroes were to be excepted from the human race. And yet Mr. Clay was the owner of slaves. Cast into life when slavery was already widely spread and deeply seated, he did not perceive, as I think no wise man has perceived, how it could be at once eradicated without producing a greater evil even to the cause of human liberty itself. . . . Those who would shiver into fragments the union of these State, tear to tatters its now-venerated Constitution, and even burn the last copy of the Bible, rather than slavery should continue a single hour, together with all their more halting sympathizers, have received, and are receiving, their just execration; and the name and opinions and influence of Mr. Clay are fully and, as I trust, effectually and enduringly arrayed against them. But I would also, if I could, array his name, opinions and influence against the opposite extreme — against a few but an increasing number of men who, for the sake of perpetuating slavery, are beginning to assail and to ridicule the white man's charter of freedom, the declaration that "all men are created free and equal."

Some quotations made in this address are specially noteworthy — one, for instance, from Jefferson, including the famous passage relating to the Missouri conflict of 1820: "But this momentous question, like a fire-bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But



this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence." Remember that this was recalled here, in the midst of the canvass of 1852, in which the two great parties had declared Clay's last compromise a "final settlement." We may note also, in the same quotation, Jefferson's avowal that the surrender of slave property "would not cost him a second thought if emancipation and expatriation could be effected, and gradually and with due sacrifices, as he thought it might be." Another quotation was from a speech of Clay himself, in 1827, favoring colonization.

Lincoln's concluding words, whatever their impression on those who heard or read them at the time, will not lack appreciation to-day:

This suggestion of the possible ultimate redemption of the African race and African continent was made twenty-five years ago. Every succeeding year has added strength to the hope of its realization. May it indeed be realized. Pharaoh's country was cursed with plagues, and his hosts were lost in the Red Sea for striving to retain a captive people who had already served them more than four hundred years. May like disasters never befall us!

Our country is prosperous and powerful; but could it have been quite all it has been, and is, and is to be, without Henry Clay? Such a man the times have demanded, and such in the providence of God was given us. But he is gone. Let us strive to deserve, as far as mortals may, the continued care of divine Providence, trusting that in future national emergencies He will not fail to provide us the instruments of safety and security.

In 1853 suit was brought in McLean County for the collection of taxes assessed upon the Illinois Central Railway—a test case, which was to decide the validity of a statute exempting that corporate property from taxation in the several counties through which the

railway passes. Lincoln was counsel for the company, and won the case. It was taken up to the State Supreme Court on appeal, twice argued there, and the decision of the lower court affirmed in 1855. The amount directly and indirectly involved, of course, was large. He asked what would now be thought a quite moderate fee, but there was higgling about its payment. If we may trust the recollection of Mr. Herndon, the original account—exclusive of \$250 received as a retainer—was for only \$2,000; and he further says: “The official to whom he was referred—supposed to have been the Superintendent, George B. McClellan, who afterward became the eminent General—looking at the bill, expressed great surprise. ‘Why, sir,’ he exclaimed, ‘this is as much as Daniel Webster himself would have charged. We can not allow such a claim.’” Several attorneys with whom Lincoln advised “induced him to increase the demand to \$5,000 and to bring suit.” Judgment was given in his favor, and the amount was “promptly paid.”

As to the “supposed” official, however, Mr. Herndon gave too free rein to conjecture. An alibi is easily proved for General McClellan, who was in Europe in 1855, and did not retire from the army until 1857, in which year began his connection with the Illinois Central Railway, of which he was at first chief engineer, and afterward vice-president. It was during the time of his official connection with this road that McClellan first knew Lincoln, as stated by the General in his “Own Story.”\* On more than one occasion they met at some

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\*“Long before the war, when Vice President of the Illinois Central Railroad Company, I knew Mr. Lincoln, for he was one of the counsel of the company.” (P. 162.) On page 29 of the same work McClellan states that he resigned his “commission as a captain of cavalry in January, 1857.”

place on the railway line where Lincoln was attending court; and while the future General does not appear to have been among the most sympathetic admirers of the many anecdotes to which, as he says, he was a listener at such times, these earliest relations were in no degree unfriendly.

It was somewhat otherwise with the beginning of Lincoln's acquaintance with Edwin M. Stanton. They first met as associate attorneys in a memorable patent case. Most of Lincoln's Illinois biographers give an erroneous date to this event,\* which Mr. Arnold states correctly as in 1855, giving the proper reference to McLean's Reports. The record shows that a bill in chancery, filed by Cyrus H. McCormick, complaining of an infringement of patent by John H. Manny and others, came up for hearing in Chicago at the July term (1855) in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Northern District of Illinois, before Justice McLean and Judge Drummond. In the taking of testimony, Mr. Manny employed Mr. P. H. Watson (afterward Assistant Secretary of War), a prominent attorney in patent cases, who had intimate relations with Mr. Stanton. The depositions taken were sent to both Lincoln and Stanton, as directed by Mr. Manny, whose extensive manufactory of reapers was at Rockford, Illinois; and both received retainers, with the understanding that they were to prepare to argue the case in court. Another attorney, Mr. George Harding, of Philadelphia, especially skilled in presenting the mechanical details involved in such a suit, was also employed. Mr. Stanton had already an established reputation in this class

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\*Herndon says 1857; Lamon ("Recollections"), 1858; Stoddard, 1859; etc.

of practice, with which Lincoln was little familiar, and both stood on the same footing as to the circumstances of their engagement. Mr. McCormick's attorneys were Hon. Reverdy Johnson and Mr. E. N. Dickinson — the latter's part being relatively the same as Mr. Harding's.

Lincoln had carefully prepared for the trial, his argument being written out in full. He had the popular side, which seemed to him the equitable one; and he was never more ambitious to acquit himself well than in the expected forensic contest with so eminent a lawyer as Mr. Johnson. Arguments having been limited to two in number on each side, and Mr. Harding being deemed indispensable, for the reason just stated, it was settled that Stanton should speak instead of Lincoln. It is not true (as has been stated\*) that he thereupon abandoned the case, returned his retaining fee, and went home. Quite to the contrary, he put his written argument in the hands of Mr. Harding for the benefit of whatever suggestion it might give him, and remained until the close, taking a lively interest in the case. He kept his retainer (\$500). and received the same additional compensation (\$2,000) as if he had addressed the court. The case was argued at Cincinnati before Judge McLean, who dismissed the suit at the cost of the complainant.

When retained in this case, Lincoln had lately been the anti-Nebraska candidate for the Senatorship to succeed Shields, after the canvass of 1854, and had barely missed the place, which was given to Judge Trumbull. To this depressing defeat was now added the disappointment of his hope to gain new professional laurels in

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\*In Lamon's "Recollections."



an encounter with a man of high national reputation as a lawyer and a statesman. The brusque ways of Stanton—a Democrat then in sympathy with Douglas and Shields—in this their first intercourse were no doubt somewhat exasperating. Disparaging remarks about Lincoln—either overheard or reported to the latter by a tale-bearer—may have been added, as has been alleged; but this was the extent of Stanton's offending. There was no stir made about the matter by any one, and of course no complaint that was expected to go beyond the domestic circle in which this was a subject of conversation.\*

Between a case involving perhaps millions of dollars and the interests of agricultural producers throughout the nation, before this high Federal court, and a simple case of assault and battery before a justice of the peace, there is a contrast sufficiently striking, yet one which illustrates the range of Lincoln's actual practice at this time. Only the week before, as stated by the late Judge Dickson, Lincoln had been counsel in a case of which he gave this account:

I was retained in the defense of a man charged before a justice of the peace with assault and battery. It was in the country, and when I got to the place of trial I found the whole neighborhood excited, and the feeling was strong against my client. I saw the only way was to get up a laugh and get the people in good humor. It turned out that the prosecuting witness was talkative; he described the fight at great length; how they had fought over a field, now by the barn, again down to the creek, and over it, and so on. I asked him on cross-examination how large that field was;

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\*While in Cincinnati on this occasion he was a guest of Judge W. M. Dickson, whose wife was a first cousin of Mrs. Lincoln.

he said it was ten acres; he knew it was, for he and some one else had stepped it off with a pole. "Well, then," I inquired, "was not that the smallest crap of a fight you have ever seen raised off of ten acres?" The hit took. The laughter was uproarious, and in half an hour the prosecuting witness was retreating amid the jeers of the crowd.

A little later this mysteriously constituted man of the forum and the hustings would be found doing advocate's work in the famous Rock Island bridge case, and making an argument which entitled him to be classed in the highest grade of his profession.

Had he stuck to the law exclusively henceforward, Lincoln would have gained a moderate fortune and more than a local celebrity. Probably he would have been as well and as long remembered as any eminent lawyer of his time. Ultimately he might have been raised to the bench, for which he had some special qualifications. But did there not yet live, beneath the embers of disappointed hope and endeavor, something of the fire of political ambition? If so, its revival needed but opportunity; and the opportunity came unsought and unexpected.

## CHAPTER X.

1854.

### *The Great Surprise — Nebraska.*

When the exclusion of slavery from the annexed Mexican territory and the suppression of slave-marketing in the District of Columbia were both demanded by a majority vote in the popular branch of the Thirtieth Congress, Calhoun and his sect at once set about kindling a new conflagration in the South. With great difficulty and after repeated failures the Compromise measures of 1850 were carried through Congress — admitting California as a free State; organizing the Territories of New Mexico and Utah without the exclusion of slavery; suppressing slave-trading in the District of Columbia; giving the South a new law for reclaiming fugitive slaves, and granting ten million dollars to Texas to quiet her claim to certain disputed territory. The followers of Calhoun were especially exasperated that California, the most essential part of the acquisition from Mexico, had added its weight to the scale it was not meant for.

Jefferson Davis, after the admission of California, resigned his seat in the Senate to run for Governor of Mississippi on a "Resistance" platform. The mode of resistance proposed was not distinctly defined in public, but it is certain that the "State Rights associations,"

whose candidate Davis was, were straining every nerve to precipitate secession. Ex-Senator Henry S. Foote canvassed the State as the "Union" candidate — sustaining the compromise — in opposition to Davis, and beat him, though by only a slender majority. On this event, it may be, depended the postponement, for ten years, of a revolt already determined on. The Southern Democrats, for the moment divided into two segments, were presently rejoicing in the election of Franklin Pierce, who made Jefferson Davis a member of his Cabinet. "Peace, peace!" was the cry; and there seemed to be peace.

The unorganized remainder of the Louisiana Purchase, lying directly west of Missouri and Iowa, and north of the Missouri Compromise line, was a vast region, chiefly defined on the old maps as the "Great American Desert." On its eastern border there were a few Indian reservations; and in time its desolateness was disclosed rather than relieved by two trails of traffic and emigration, one leading to Santa Fe, in New Mexico, and the other across the Rocky Mountains by the South Pass. These thoroughfares the Mexican war and the Mexican acquisitions had given increased consequence; and the settlers on the Missouri border were already coveting the Indian lands near them. So it happened that soon after the admission of California as a State and the organization of New Mexico as a Territory, Congress was petitioned to create a territorial government for this so-called "Platte country." In December, 1852, a bill responsive to this prayer was introduced in the House, and in the February following



was favorably reported, with the recommendation that the name of the territory be changed from "Platte" to Nebraska, which was agreed to. Eight days after (February 10th) the bill was passed, 98 to 43; and the next day it was referred in the Senate to the Committee on Territories, of which Douglas was chairman.

Senator Douglas had lately been elected for a second term. In the previous year he had figured rather prominently in the national convention of his party as a Presidential candidate — the main contest at the outset being between Messrs. Cass and Buchanan; and had the "Young Democracy" been less eager to thrust him forward as against these two veterans, there is no manifest reason why the choice might not have alighted on Douglas instead of the unobtrusive ex-Senator from New Hampshire. As it was, Douglas had much to hope for at the next trial. He had never given the South offense, and was little disposed to do so now. Six days after its reference he reported back the Nebraska bill without amendment, recommending its passage. The status of the new territory as to slavery, as the bill then stood, was clearly defined by the Missouri Compromise. On the 2d of March he asked that the bill be taken up for consideration. Only twenty Senators voted in the affirmative, while twenty-five, all Southern, voted against his motion. He tried again on the next and last day of the session, when he was again defeated, by a vote exclusively Southern.

Senator Atchison, of Missouri, had vaguely intimated some exigency requiring prompt action in negotiating with the Indians just across the border of his State for the extinguishment of their title to certain

reservations; and some of his constituents were importuning him to favor an immediate organization of the Platte territory. He and his colleague alone among Southern Senators voted for present action on the bill; and in explanation of his vote he spoke significantly enough, though a little darkly. No State was perhaps, he said, "more deeply interested in this question than Missouri." The best, if not the largest part of the proposed territory, and "perhaps the only portion of it that in half a century will become a State, lies immediately west of the State of Missouri." While his remarks disclosed clearly enough his unwillingness to see a non-slaveholding territory organized on the west of Missouri, was he not as yet quite innocent of even a transient thought that it would be practicable to annul the restriction by direct action of Congress? He more probably counted upon its easy evasion by the gradual and quiet expansion of slaveholding communities on the western border, in like manner as slavery had spread into the free soil of Texas before its annexation. If such was his policy, he was wiser in his generation — or at least more cunning — than those who ultimately chose a bolder course.

All this skirmishing about Nebraska was little noticed outside of Washington. It produced little excitement even there, but served to introduce a new name, "Nebraska," which later events were to make familiar.

The session closed and President Pierce was inaugurated. The Senate promptly confirmed his chosen Cabinet officers, of whom the recent "Resistance" candidate for Governor of Mississippi was a leading spirit. In his December message the President declared, as he

had done in his inaugural address, that during his term nothing should be done with his consent to reopen the closed agitation. On the 14th of December Senator Dodge, of Iowa, introduced a bill for the organization of the Territory of Nebraska, similar in terms to that of the previous session. Douglas reported it back from his committee — this time with amendments — on the 4th of January (1854). A question had arisen in 1850, said the report, "whether slavery was prohibited by law in the country acquired from Mexico," and the question was disposed of by leaving the issue to the people themselves in New Mexico and Utah. So, too, "a similar question" had now arisen concerning "the right to hold slaves in the proposed Territory of Nebraska when the Indian laws shall be withdrawn and the country thrown open to emigration and settlement." Under the eighth section of the Missouri Act of March 6, 1820, slavery in the territory in question was "forever prohibited"; but, "as in the case of Mexican law in New Mexico and Utah, it is a disputed point whether slavery is prohibited in the Nebraska country by valid enactment. The decision of this question involves the constitutional power of Congress to pass laws prescribing and regulating the domestic institutions of the various territories of the Union." Senator Dixon, of Kentucky, gave notice that when the bill came up for consideration, he should propose an amendment annulling the said eighth section of the Missouri Act, as applicable to Nebraska. This met the issue squarely. On motion of Douglas, the bill was thereupon recommitted, and a week later he reported a substitute creating two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, and declaring the Missouri Compromise

restriction "inoperative." This proving insufficient, he added the words, "and void," ending all Southern opposition.

"The country was at once in a blaze." The mere proposition of repeal seemed a sacrilege, and popular excitement rose to a pitch unprecedented even in 1850. Douglas had not taken the momentous step until after consultation with President Pierce, who gave it his approval, and pledged the power of his administration in its support. Mr. Pierce kept this promise.

When Douglas asked the Senate to proceed at once to the consideration of the bill as finally amended, Senator Chase objected, asking a postponement until the following week, and by general consent the 30th of January was fixed for opening the discussion. Meanwhile a vigorous Anti-Nebraska manifesto, signed by Senators Chase and Sumner, and by other members of Congress, was sent to the country. Resolutions indignantly condemning the proposed action were introduced into several State Legislatures then in session, and passed with emphasis and promptitude. The press of the free States was never more terribly earnest in the display of fiery indignation. The whole power of the administration, of which Douglas expected so much, was far from sufficient to keep in line the rank and file of the Democratic party. On the other hand, Northern Whigs — by no means excepting those who had been most conservative in their views of slavery agitation — disgusted and alienated by the course of their Southern fellow-partisans, who in a sectional caucus decided to support the Nebraska bill, were in a mood to welcome



the obviously inevitable advent of a reorganization of parties.

On the 30th of January, when the question came up according to assignment in the Senate, Douglas, having a bitter foretaste of what was coming, angrily arraigned Senator Chase and his associates for their manifesto, and used all his ingenuity in defending his own action. The debate was prolonged, deepening the impression first made upon the public mind. The "Nebraska bill" passed the Senate on the 3d day of March. It was not at once acted on in the House. Democratic members from the free States found it perilous — with an election just at hand — to stand in party line. By a vote of 113 to 100, on the final test, the consummation was reached on the 26th of May.

At once began the struggle, which lasted for years, between the friends and foes of slavery for the control of the Territory of Kansas.

## CHAPTER XI.

1854-1855.

*First "Anti-Nebraska" Campaign — Lincoln and Douglas  
on the Stump — Trumbull, and Not Lincoln,  
Elected Senator.*

Returning home late in August, Douglas encountered a storm of popular wrath at Chicago, where he attempted to speak. For the first time in his life he found himself facing a turbulent throng, styled by him a mob, which determined that he should not be heard, and which would not be cowed. There was open and serious revolt in the party he had hitherto ruled without question. Later he had willing auditors in minor towns; and on the 4th of October, at the State fair in Springfield, dividing time with Lincoln by agreement, he addressed a multitude gathered from all parts of Illinois. It was now within four weeks of the election at which Congressional representatives and members of the State Legislature were to be chosen. A Senatorship was also at stake, as the term of General Shields was about expiring. Usually aggressive and audacious, it was remarked that Douglas was different in his manner on this occasion. He sought to conciliate, and his words implied a pervading memory of the Chicago storm. Yet it was Douglas who spoke — always able, wary, and plausible. Lincoln was relied upon by

the Anti-Nebraskans, Whig and Democratic, as their most effective champion, and his speech in turn was so masterly as to surprise both friends and opponents. Hearts and voices went with him, and when he closed, the applause was so general and so tumultuous that Douglas could have enjoyed himself little better here than at his home reception a month before. He rose for a rejoinder, but his remarks were brief. Twilight being at hand, the meeting temporarily adjourned, with the understanding that he would speak more at length in the evening, but this he failed to do, and his absence was a subject for disparaging comment.

Douglas spoke three hours at Peoria on the 16th of October, and was followed by Lincoln in what he regarded in later years as his best speech. As written out by him and published in the *Springfield Journal*, it probably included a reproduction, in the main, of his speech at the State fair.

Announcing his subject as "the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the propriety of its restoration," he insisted that distinction be made and kept between existing domestic slavery and its extension. To aid "a clear understanding of what the Missouri Compromise was," he gave historic details, beginning with the passage of the Ordinance of 1787, which shut the institution out from five great central States of the West. "Thus," he said, "with the author of the Declaration of Independence the policy of prohibiting slavery in new territory began. Thus, away back of the Constitution, in the pure, fresh, free breath of the Revolution, the State of Virginia and the National Congress put that policy in practice. Thus, through more than

sixty of the best years of the Republic, did that policy steadily work to its great and beneficial end. And thus, in those five States and five millions of free, enterprising people, we have before us the rich fruits of this policy. But now new light breaks upon us. . . . We find even some men who drew their first breath, and every other breath of their lives, under this very restriction, now live in dread of absolute suffocation if they should be restricted in the sacred right of taking slaves to Nebraska. That perfect liberty they sigh for — the liberty of making slaves of other people — Jefferson never thought of; their own fathers never thought of; they never thought of themselves a year ago.”

He then spoke of the territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase, in 1803, and the Missouri controversy, “the first great slavery agitation in the nation,” during which “threats of breaking up the Union were freely made, and the ablest public men of the day became seriously alarmed” — a controversy quieted at length by the act approved March 6, 1820, “providing that Missouri might come into the Union with slavery, but that in all the remaining part of the territory purchased of France which lies north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude slavery should never be permitted. This provision of law is the Missouri Compromise. . . . It directly applied to Iowa, Minnesota, and the present bone of contention, Kansas and Nebraska.” After noticing the controversy following the acquisition of Mexican territory, and stating the terms of the Compromise of 1850, he gave an account of the “Nebraska” legislation, which declared the Missouri Compromise “inoperative and void” — “so that the people who go



and settle in Nebraska and Kansas may establish slavery or exclude it, as they may see fit." Continuing, he said:

This declared indifference, but, as I must think, real zeal for the spread of slavery, I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself; I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world; enables the enemies of free institutions with plausibility to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity; and especially because it forces so many really good men among ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty, criticising the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest. . . .

I think I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses North and South. Doubtless there are individuals, on both sides, who would not hold slaves under any circumstances, and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew, if it were out of existence. We know that some Southern men do free their slaves, go North, and become tip-top Abolitionists; while some Northern ones go South, and become most cruel slave-masters. When the Southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we are, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of it in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do, as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia—to their own native land. But a few moments' reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) there may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. . . . What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this;

and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not. Whether this feeling accords with justice and sound judgment, is not the sole question, if indeed it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, can not be safely disregarded. We can not, then, make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted; but for their tardiness in this, I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the South.

When they remind us of their constitutional rights, I acknowledge them, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives, which should not in its stringency be more likely to carry a free man into slavery than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one.

But all this, to my judgment, furnishes no more excuse for permitting slavery to go into our own free territory than it would for reviving the African slave-trade by law. The law which forbids the bringing of slaves from Africa, and that which has so long forbidden the taking of them into Nebraska, can hardly be distinguished on any moral principle; and the repeal of the former could find quite as plausible excuses as that of the latter. . . .

Whether slavery shall go into Nebraska, or other new Territories, is not a matter of exclusive concern to the people who may go there. The whole nation is interested that the best use shall be made of these Territories. We want them for the homes of free white people. This they can not be, to any considerable extent, if slavery shall be planted within them. Slave States are places for poor white people to remove *from*, not to remove *to*. New free States are the places for poor people to go to and better their condition. For this use the nation needs these Territories.

Still further: There are constitutional relations between the slave and free States which are degrading to the latter. We are under legal obligations to catch and return their runaway slaves to them—a sort of dirty, disagreeable job which, I believe, as a general rule, the slaveholders will not perform for one another. Then again: In the control of the government—the management of the partnership affairs—they have greatly the advantage of us. . . . The slaves

do not vote; they are only counted and so used as to swell the influence of the white people's votes. The practical effect of this is more aptly shown by a comparison of the States of South Carolina and Maine. South Carolina has six Representatives, and so has Maine; South Carolina eight Presidential electors, and so has Maine. . . . But how are they in the number of their white people? Maine has 581,813, while South Carolina has 274,567; Maine has twice as many as South Carolina, and 32,679 over. Thus each white man in South Carolina is more than double of any man in Maine. This is all because South Carolina, besides her free people, has 384,984 slaves. The South Carolinian has precisely the same advantage over the white man in every other free State as in Maine. He is more than the double of any one of us in this crowd. . . . This principle in the aggregate gives the slave States in the present Congress twenty additional representatives, being seven more than the whole majority by which they passed the Nebraska bill.

Now, all this is manifestly unfair; yet I do not mention it to complain of it, in so far as it is already settled. It is in the Constitution, and I do not, for that cause or any other cause, propose to destroy, or alter, or disregard the Constitution. I stand to it fairly, fully and firmly. But when I am told I must leave it altogether to other people to say whether new partners are to be bred up and brought into the firm, on the same degrading terms against me, I respectfully demur. . . .

Finally, I insist that if there is anything which it is the duty of the whole people to never intrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservation and perpetuity of their own liberties and institutions. And if they shall think, as I do, that the extension of slavery endangers them, more than any or all other causes, how recreant to themselves if they submit the question, and with it the fate of their country, to a mere handful of men, bent only on temporary self-interest! . . .

But Nebraska is urged as a Union-saving measure. Well, I too go for saving the Union. Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any great evil to avoid a greater one. But when I go to Union-saving, I



must believe, at least, that the means I employ have some adaptation to the end. To my mind, Nebraska has no such adaptation.

“It hath no relish of salvation in it.”

It is an aggravation, rather, of the only thing which ever endangered the Union. When it came upon us, all was peace and quiet. The nation was looking to the forming of new bonds of union, and a long course of peace and prosperity seemed to lie before us. In the whole range of possibility, there scarcely appears to me to have been anything out of which the slavery agitation could have been revived, except the very project of repealing the Missouri Compromise. Every inch of territory we owned already had a definite settlement of the slavery question, by which all parties were pledged to abide. Indeed, there was no uninhabited country on the continent which we could acquire, if we except some extreme Northern regions which are wholly out of the question.\*

In this state of affairs, the Genius of Discord himself could scarcely have invented a way of again getting us by the ears, but by turning back and destroying the peace measures of the past. . . . It could not but be expected by its author that it would be looked upon as a measure for the extension of slavery, aggravated by a gross breach of faith. Argue as you will, and long as you will, this is the naked front and aspect of the measure. And in this aspect, it could not but produce agitation.

Slavery is founded in the selfishness of man's nature — opposition to it, in his love of justice. These principles are in eternal antagonism; and when brought into collision so fiercely as slavery-extension brings them, shocks and throes and convulsions must ceaselessly follow.† Repeal the Missouri Compromise — repeal all compromise — repeal the Declaration of Independence — repeal all past history — you

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\*And yet—then least of all in Lincoln's mind—remote Alaska was soon to be ours!

†This sentence is certainly as explicit as the later “house-divided” passage, or as the “irrepressible conflict” of Seward.



still can not repeal human nature. It still will be the abundance of man's heart that slavery-extension is wrong; and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth will continue to speak. . . .

Some Yankees in the East are sending emigrants to Nebraska to exclude slavery from it; and, so far as I can judge, they expect the question to be decided by voting in some way or other. But the Missourians are awake, too. They are within a stone's throw of the contested ground. They hold meetings, and pass resolutions in which not the slightest allusion to voting is made. They resolve that slavery already exists in the Territory; that more shall go there; that they, remaining in Missouri, will protect it; and that Abolitionists shall be hung or driven away. Through all this, bowie-knives and six-shooters are seen plainly enough; but never a glimpse of the ballot-box. . . .

Could there be a more apt invention to bring about collision and violence on the slavery question than this Nebraska project is? I do not charge or believe that such was intended by Congress; but if they had literally formed a ring, and placed champions within it to fight out the controversy, the fight could be no more likely to come off than it is. And if this fight should begin, is it likely to take a very peaceful Union-saving turn? Will not the first drop of blood so shed be the real knell of the Union? . . .

I particularly object to the new position which the avowed principle of this Nebraska law gives to slavery in the body politic. . . . Near eighty years ago we began by declaring all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration that for some men to enslave others is a "sacred right of self-government." These principles can not stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon; and whoever holds to the one must despise the other. . . . In our greedy chase to make profit of the negro, let us beware how we "cancel and tear to pieces" even the white man's charter of freedom.

Our republican robe is soiled and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. . . . Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it the practices and policy which harmonize with it. Let North and South, let all Americans,

let all lovers of liberty everywhere join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union, but we shall have so saved it as to make it and keep it forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it that the succeeding millions of free, happy people, the world over, shall rise up and call us blessed, to the latest generation.

The year, which opened with the proposed repeal of the Missouri restriction, closed with a divided and defeated Democratic party. The powerful organization, of which Douglas was master and manager in Illinois, was now, for the first time, broken and beaten. It failed to secure a working majority in the Legislature, which was to choose a Senator. The Whig members desired the election of Lincoln, to whom, as the leading champion of the Anti-Nebraska cause, the place seemed to be due; but five Democratic members opposed to Shields cast their votes for Judge Lyman Trumbull, an Anti-Nebraska Democrat, on the first ballot in joint assembly, (February 8, 1855,) so that Lincoln received only forty-five votes, fifty-one being necessary to a choice. After further balloting, with a gain of but two for Lincoln, a new candidate was presented on the Democratic side (Lieutenant-Governor Matteson), whose defeat seemed possible only by uniting on Trumbull. Lincoln promptly advised his friends accordingly — effacing himself and saving the cause.

## CHAPTER XII.

1855-1858.

*Anti-Nebraska Coalition — Kansas Conflict -- Republican Party Organized — Fremont Beaten by Buchanan — Dred Scott Decision — Utah Rebellion — Cases in Court.*

The Anti-Nebraska coalition was generally successful in the elections of 1855, though with somewhat diminished majorities. Meanwhile a new party, popularly called Know-Nothings, had grown into prominence in several of the Southern as well as Northern States. Its National Council met in secret session at Philadelphia in June of this year, and found itself hopelessly divided on the prevailing subject of discord. A break-up occurred, further preparing the way for a "union of all elements" in the North opposed to the Administration. Lincoln took no part in the Know-Nothing movement, which had, however, a large following in his State. In some other parts of the country, and particularly in Massachusetts, it had completely revolutionized politics, carrying everything before it. This must have been due quite as much to the efficacy of its secret organization as to its ostensible objects — checking foreign influences and counteracting the compact power of naturalized voters. As an "American" party the organization was kept up for some years longer at the South, but in the North it soon dwindled and died.

The conflict in Kansas had gone on with vigor. Andrew H. Reeder, of Pennsylvania, the first Governor, took the helm before the end of the year (1854), and ordered the election of a Legislature and of a delegate to Congress in the following March. The pro-slavery party prevailed, largely through the votes of Missourians who crossed the border solely to deposit their ballots, and through fraudulent returns. The Governor rejected the returned members in six districts and ordered new elections therein, with the result that in nearly every instance anti-slavery men were chosen. These, however, were unhesitatingly voted out of their seats and the first returned members voted in.

The interesting body so constituted proceeded to pass bills for the establishment of slavery and the suppression of Abolitionism. Reeder having vetoed certain enactments which he thought to be atrocious, they were passed over his veto, and the Legislature reciprocated his opposition by asking President Pierce to remove him. The request was granted with alacrity. Ex-Governor Shannon, of Ohio, succeeded Governor Reeder on the 1st of September.

There was no more intent spectator of the opening scenes of the Kansas drama than Lincoln. Some of his reflections on the occasion appear in the following passages of a letter to his Kentucky friend, Speed (August 24, 1855):

You know what a poor correspondent I am. Ever since I received your very agreeable letter of the 22d of May I have been intending to write you in answer to it. You suggest that in political action now you and I would differ. I suppose we would; not quite as much, however, as you may think. You know I dislike slavery, and you fully admit the



abstract wrong of it. So far there is no cause of difference. But you say that sooner than yield your legal rights to the slave, especially at the bidding of those who are not themselves interested, you would see the Union dissolved. I am not aware than any one is bidding you to yield that right — very certainly I am not. I leave that matter entirely to yourself. I also acknowledge your rights and my obligations under the Constitution in regard to slaves. I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down, and caught and carried back to their stripes and unrequited toils; but I bite my lip and keep quiet.

In 1841 you and I had together a tedious low-water trip on a steamboat from Louisville to St. Louis. You may remember, as I well do, that from Louisville to the mouth of the Ohio there were on board ten or a dozen slaves shackled together with irons. That sight was a continued torment to me, and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio, or any other slave border. It is not fair for you to assume that I have no interest in a thing which has, and continually exercises, the power of making me miserable. You ought rather to appreciate how much the great body of the Northern people do crucify their feelings, in order to maintain their loyalty to the Constitution and the Union.

I do oppose the extension of slavery because my judgment and feeling so prompt me; but I am under no obligations to the contrary. If for this you and I must differ, differ we must. You say, if you were President, you would send an army, and hang the leaders of the Missouri outrages upon the Kansas elections; still, if Kansas fairly votes herself a slave State, she must be admitted, or the Union must be dissolved. But how if she votes herself a slave State unfairly — that is, by the very means for which you say you would hang men? . . . You think Stringfellow & Co. ought to be hung; and yet, at the next Presidential election, you will vote for the exact type and representative of Stringfellow. The slave-breeders and slave-traders are a small, odious and detested class among you, and yet in politics they dictate the course of all of you, and are as completely your masters as you are the master of your own negroes.

You inquire where I now stand. That is a disputed point. I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no

Whigs, and that I am an Abolitionist. When I was at Washington I voted for the Wilmot proviso as good as forty times, and I never heard of any one attempting to un-Whig me for that. I now do no more that oppose the extension of slavery. I am not a Know-Nothing — that is certain. How could I be? How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring that “all men are created equal.” We now practically read it, “All men are created equal except negroes.” When the Know-Nothings get control, it would read, “All men are created equal except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.” When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.

Mary will probably pass a day or two in Louisville in October. My kindest regards to Mrs. Speed. On the leading subject of this letter I have more of her sympathy than I have of yours; and yet let me say I am

Your friend forever,

A. LINCOLN.

The Free-State men in Kansas, in mass meeting at Big Springs, soon after Governor Shannon's arrival, denounced the alleged Legislature as a fraud, and repudiated all its works. Consequently they did not participate in the election, ordered by that body for the 1st of October, for the choice of a Delegate to Congress — as, in fact, it would seem to have been quite useless to do. They were not intending, however, to submit quietly to the yoke, and they had assembled for business. They effected a party organization, and took measures for a convention, which met at Topeka on the 19th of September. It was determined that a Delegate should be voted for on the second Tuesday of October. Thus it

happened that the Slave-State party elected John W. Whitfield (Indian agent, from Tennessee) as Delegate on one day, and the Free-State party the week after — of course irregularly — elected ex-Governor Reeder, who had remained in the Territory after being superseded. This party also held a convention to frame a State Constitution, at Topeka, on the 23d of October. Under the Free-State Constitution so framed, admission into the Union was to be sought. It had been practically a condition of civil war from the first, with actual bloodshed, as well as bolts and counter-bolts of legislation and convention, and continual tumult. As yet, too, there had been but the beginning of sorrows. The actual settlers who wanted a Free-State government were now greatly in the majority, but their adversaries had not only the advantage of being nearer their base, as earlier remarked by Lincoln, but also of having the strong arm of the central power at Washington on their side.

The Congress which met in December, 1855, was without a Democratic majority in the lower house. After a long struggle, Nathaniel P. Banks, of Massachusetts, Anti-Nebraska and American, was chosen Speaker. A committee (Messrs. W. A. Howard, of Michigan, John Sherman, of Ohio, and Mordecai Oliver, of Missouri) was appointed to investigate the affairs of Kansas. The voluminous report of the majority of this committee figured prominently in the next Presidential canvass. Whitfield took his seat as Delegate, and held it to the end of that Congress.

Such was the situation when a preliminary meeting of delegates from the free States, representing those



opposed to the Administration and its Kansas policy, was held at Pittsburg on Washington's birthday, 1856, for consultation and action in regard to the organization of a consolidated opposition party. This convention issued an address, written by Mr. Raymond, of the *New York Times*, and called a National Convention of the "Republican" party, to be held at Philadelphia on the 17th of June following, for the nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President.

The first Republican State Convention, under that name, in Illinois was held at Bloomington on the 29th of May, 1856. Lincoln took part in forming the new organization, and made at this convention an earnest and stimulating speech, of which there was but a brief report. This was the chief event of the occasion, aside from the appointment of delegates to the national convention at Philadelphia.

The Democratic National Convention met at Cincinnati on the 2d of June, and nominated James Buchanan for President (Douglas having 121 votes and Buchanan 168 on the last ballot) and John C. Breckinridge for Vice-President. At Philadelphia, the Republicans nominated Colonel John C. Fremont (who had 359 votes, and Justice John McLean 196,) for President, and William L. Dayton (who had 259 votes, and Abraham Lincoln 110,) for Vice-President. Lincoln had not been a candidate for the place, and was surprised to learn that he had been so complimented. The American party nominated Millard Fillmore for President and Andrew J. Donelson for Vice-President. These candidates were indorsed by a thin national convention



of Whigs at Baltimore in September — Judge Edward Bates, of Missouri, presiding.

It has been reasonably affirmed that Lincoln would have been nominated for Governor had he not in advance declined. Without the support of the Americans, the Republican candidate could have no chance of success, and this co-operation was effected on the Governorship by the nomination of Colonel William H. Bissell, a former member of Congress, who had served in the Mexican War. Lincoln, again on the electoral ticket, took a leading part in the national canvass in Illinois. Bissell was elected, showing a majority against Douglas and the Administration, but, with the opposition votes divided between Fremont and Fillmore, the electoral vote of the State was given to Buchanan.

In all the slave States except Maryland (which voted for Fillmore) Democratic electors were chosen, and also in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and California. All the other States voted for Fremont and Dayton. The electoral vote stood: For Buchanan, 174; Fremont, 114; Fillmore, 8. The popular vote was more equally divided, Buchanan receiving 1,838,169; Fremont, 1,341,264; Fillmore, 874,534. In New Jersey and California, as well as in Illinois, the Democrats had only a plurality of votes. Had the opposition been fully united in these States, there would have been twenty-two electoral votes less in the Buchanan column, which could have spared but three more without leaving the final election to the House of Representatives.

James Buchanan, last Democratic President of the old regime, was not a leader. Solid, not brilliant, by

persistence and constancy in the course marked out by his party, he attained late in life its highest reward. Absence as Minister to England during the inception of the Nebraska-Kansas strife was an opportune aid to this benign result. More of absence or less of leadership at this juncture might possibly have left Douglas a prospect bright in comparison with that of his aged competitor. It was not a luxurious heritage of power to which President Buchanan succeeded. Civil war on a limited scale was prevailing in Kansas. During the late canvass he had made fair professions, no doubt heartily enough intending what he said when he promised, if elected, to maintain an equal and just policy in regard to Kansas. His party, with the help of these assurances, had barely succeeded in carrying Pennsylvania and Indiana in October — sufficient, with a nearly unanimous South, to insure his election in November. The necessity of conciliating support in the North, however, had taken him farther than the party management would allow in practice. Four of his Cabinet officers were of the South: Howell Cobb, of Georgia, Secretary of the Treasury; John B. Floyd, of Virginia, Secretary of War; Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi, Secretary of the Interior, and Aaron V. Brown, of Tennessee, Postmaster-General — all, if we except the last, who died before the close of the term, Secessionists at heart, if not already so in purpose. The three remaining places were respectively given to Lewis Cass, of Michigan, Secretary of State; Isaac Toucey, of Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy, and Jeremiah S. Black, of Pennsylvania, Attorney-General.

The second Governor of Kansas, Mr. Shannon, sent

by President Pierce, had been recalled by him in a few months, and replaced by John W. Geary. President Buchanan put a distinguished man in Geary's place — Robert J. Walker, former Secretary of the Treasury, long identified with the South as a Mississippian, though born in Pennsylvania. Under his auspices a convention met at Leecompton and framed a State Constitution. The people were asked to vote (in December, 1857) for the Constitution "with slavery" or "without slavery," but not allowed to reject it altogether. The Free-State men, now largely in the majority, refused to participate in such a vote.

Directly after Mr. Buchanan's inauguration, the Dred Scott decision — determined the year before, and opinions written out — was announced by the Supreme Court of the United States, Chief Justice Taney speaking for a majority of the court. By a suggestive coincidence of dates, this case had come before the highest court in the same month (May, 1854) that the Kansas-Nebraska Act was approved by President Pierce. Dred Scott, the slave of an army surgeon in Missouri, had been taken by his master to other military posts — Rock Island, in Iowa, and Fort Snelling, in Minnesota — and afterward returned with him to Missouri. He claimed his freedom, on the ground that his having been taken to free territory emancipated him. The case was dismissed for want of jurisdiction — because the suitor was not a "citizen." Judge Taney in his opinion gave new fuel to the flame by his construction of the Constitution on other questions, and especially by denying to Congress any power to exclude slavery from the territories.

There was also a little rebellion farther west than Kansas to add to the troubles of the veteran President. Polygamous Utah resisted the judicial authorities placed over its people by the Federal Government, and a military force was presently sent to suppress the insurrection.

On the stump in the summer of 1857 Douglas took upon his shoulders the new burden of the Dred Scott decision — a theme which excited the zeal of Lincoln scarcely less than the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. In his first important speech after Buchanan's inauguration, Lincoln said in opening (at Springfield, June 26, 1857):

Two weeks ago Judge Douglas spoke here, on the several subjects of Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, and Utah. I listened to the speech at the time, and have read the report of it since. It was intended to controvert opinions which I think just, and to assail (politically, not personally) those men who, in common with me, entertain those opinions. For this reason I wished then, and still wish to make some answer to it, which I now take the opportunity of doing.

I begin with Utah. If it prove to be true, as is probable, that the people of Utah are in open rebellion against the United States, then Judge Douglas is in favor of repealing their territorial organization, and attaching them to the adjoining States for judicial purposes. I say, too, if they are in rebellion, they ought to be somehow coerced to obedience, and I am not now prepared to admit or deny that the Judge's mode of coercing them is not as good as any. The Republicans can fall in with it, without taking back anything they have ever said. To be sure, it would be a considerable backing down by Judge Douglas from his much-vaunted doctrine of self-government for the Territories; but this is only additional proof of what was very plain from the beginning, that the doctrine was a mere deceitful pre-



tense for the benefit of slavery.\* . . . The substance of the Judge's speech on Kansas is an effort to put the Free State men in the wrong for not voting at the election of delegates to the Constitutional Convention. . . . I readily agree that if all had a chance to vote, they ought to have voted. If, on the contrary, as they allege, and Judge Douglas ventures not particularly to contradict, few only of the Free-State men had a chance to vote, they were perfectly right in staying away from the polls in a body. . . .

Of the Dred Scott decision he said:

That decision declares two propositions — first, that a negro can not sue in the United States Courts; and secondly, that Congress can not prohibit slavery in the Territories. It was made by a divided court, dividing differently on the different points. . . . Judicial decisions have two uses — first, to absolutely determine the case decided; and secondly, to indicate to the public how other similar cases will be decided when they arise. For the latter use they are called “precedents” and “authorities.” Judicial decisions are of greater or less authority as precedents, according to circumstances. That this should be so accords both with common sense, and the customary understanding of the legal profession. If this important decision had been made by the unanimous concurrence of the judges, and without any apparent partisan bias, and in accordance with legal public expectation, and with the steady practice of the departments, throughout our history, and had been in no part based upon assumed historical facts which are not really true; or, if wanting in some of these, it had been before the Court more than once, and had there been affirmed and reaffirmed through a course of years, it then might be, perhaps would be, factious, nay, even revolutionary, not to acquiesce in it as a precedent.

But when, as is true, we find it wanting in all these claims to the public confidence, it is not resistance, it is not factious,

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\*One of the sharpest arrows of the Philadelphia platform had been feathered with the exasperating phrase, “twin relics of barbarism—polygamy and slavery.”

it is not even disrespectful, to treat it as not having yet quite established a settled doctrine for the country. . . .

I have said, in substance, that the Dred Scott decision was, in part, based on assumed historical facts which were not really true, and I ought not to leave the subject without giving some reasons for saying this. I therefore give an instance or two which I think fully sustain me. Chief Justice Taney, in delivering the opinion of the majority of the Court, insists at great length that negroes were no part of the people who made, or for whom was made, the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States. On the contrary, Judge Curtis, in his dissenting opinion, shows that in five of the then thirteen States, to-wit: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and North Carolina, free negroes were voters, and, in proportion to their numbers, had the same part in making the Constitution that the white people did.

Again, Chief Justice Taney says: "It is difficult, at this day, to realize the state of public opinion in relation to that unfortunate race, which prevailed in the civilized and enlightened portions of the world at the time of the Declaration of Independence, and when the Constitution of the United States was framed and adopted." And again, after quoting from the Declaration, he says: "The general words above quoted would seem to include the whole human family, and if they were used in a similar instrument at this day, would be so understood."

In these words the Chief Justice does not directly assert, but plainly assumes as a fact, that the public estimate of the black man is more favorable now than it was in the days of the Revolution. This assumption is a mistake. In some trifling particulars the condition of that race has been ameliorated; but, as a whole, in this country, the change between then and now is decidedly the other way, and their ultimate destiny has never appeared so hopeless as in the last three or four years. In two of the five States — New Jersey and North Carolina — that then gave the free negro the right of voting, the right has since been taken away; and in the third — New York — it has been greatly abridged, while it has not been extended, so far as I know, to a single additional State, though the number of the States has been more

than doubled. In those days, as I understand, masters could, at their own pleasure, emancipate their slaves; but since then such legal restraints have been made upon emancipation as to amount almost to prohibition. In those days Legislatures held the unquestioned power to abolish slavery in their respective States; but now it is becoming quite fashionable for State Constitutions to withhold that power from the Legislatures. In those days, by common consent, the spread of the black man's bondage to the new countries was prohibited; but now Congress decides that it will not continue the prohibition — and the Supreme Court decides that it could not if it would. In those days our Declaration of Independence was held sacred by all, and thought to include all; but now to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it is assailed, sneered at, construed, hawked at, and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it. All the powers of the earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him; ambition follows, philosophy follows, and the theology of the day is fast joining the cry. . . .

Three years and a half ago Judge Douglas brought forward his famous Nebraska bill. The country was at once in a blaze. He scorned all opposition, and carried it through Congress. Since then he has seen himself superseded in a Presidential nomination, . . . and he has seen that successful rival constitutionally elected, not by the strength of friends, but by the division of his adversaries, being in a popular minority of nearly four hundred thousand votes. He has seen his chief aids in his own State, Shields and Richardson, politically speaking, successively tried, convicted and executed for an offense not their own, but his. And now he sees his own case standing next on the docket for trial.

There is a natural disgust in the minds of nearly all white people to the idea of an indiscriminate amalgamation of the white and black races, and Judge Douglas evidently is basing his chief hope upon the chances of his being able to appropriate the benefit of this disgust to himself. If he can, by much drumming and repeating, fasten the odium of that idea upon his adversaries, he thinks he can struggle through the storm. . . . Chief Justice Taney, in his opinion in the Dred Scott case, admits that the language of the



Declaration is broad enough to include the whole human family ; but he and Judge Douglas argue that the authors of that instrument did not intend to include negroes, by the fact that they did not at once actually place them on an equality with the whites. . . .

They did not means to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This they said, and this meant. . . . Its authors meant it to be as, thank God, it is now proving itself, a stumbling-block to all those who, in after times, might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. . . .

The plainest print can not be read through a gold eagle, and it will be ever hard to find many men who will send a slave to Liberia and pay his passage, while they can send him to a new country—Kansas, for instance—and sell him for fifteen hundred dollars, and the rise.

As yet Douglas had manifested no repugnance toward the policy pursued for making Kansas a slave State, marked as in this regard was the absence of any practical virtue in his fine theory of popular sovereignty. This device, he could see, was now in imminent danger of returning to plague its originator. There was a dilemma. To openly sustain the popular majority in Kansas was to forfeit Southern support; to abandon the majority there and help their enemies within and without was to stultify himself and to be ruined at home.

In the spring of 1858 Lincoln appeared at Beardstown as counsel in a case which recalled the Menard country, where the Sangamon Falls still roar as of old. their voice resounding through the valley and over the



heights on which once stood the hamlet where he lived as clerk, surveyor, law student, postmaster, and, after a tour as captain of mounted volunteers, received the votes of all about him for member of the Legislature. More than twenty-five years had passed since he met Jack Armstrong in a tough wrestling match, afterwards visiting occasionally at his house, and sometimes rocking the cradle in which lay baby William, his son. Jack was now dead, and the boy, grown into manhood, had come to be the chief support of his mother, with whom he lived on the old farm. Late in the summer of 1857 he and other young men of the neighborhood had gone to a camp-meeting in the adjoining county of Mason. Around what might be called a sutler's wagon of the enemy, stationed at a distance from the Methodist encampment, thirsty groups were gathered as the night came on. An affray occurred, in which one Metzgar was mortally wounded by blows on the head. Armstrong and another young man were charged with the homicide, lodged in the Mason County jail, and indicted. There was an intense feeling against the accused, and there was one swift witness ready to swear that he saw the fatal blows struck. Armstrong's counsel obtained for his client a change of venue to Cass County and a postponement of the trial until spring. Learning the heavy trouble which had befallen the family, Lincoln promised the prisoner's mother to aid in his defense. It was a gratuitous service. At the trial the witness before alluded to identified the accused as the one who struck the fatal blows with a slung-shot, and this, with the other evidence for the State, seemed to place his guilt beyond reasonable doubt. For the defense there

was only testimony to his previous good reputation and peaceable disposition; but the chief accusing witness, on cross-examination, had been led to say that a full moon was shining clearly at the time, and was about where the sun would be at 10 o'clock in the forenoon. Lincoln produced an almanac to be given to the jury, and in the course of his argument — one of the most eloquent he ever made in court — pointed out that the lunar calendar proved the witness a perjurer. Armstrong was acquitted.

A verdict that seemed so impossible before Lincoln spoke, the disappointed ones accounted for by pretending that the almanac used was for the year previous to the homicide, and that the jurors were cheated. Of course such a charge against such a lawyer should need no disproof; yet it found some credence among dull people, who did not think or did not care to compare the almanac of 1856 with that of 1857, which would have settled the matter beyond cavil.

Another instance, less noted but no less notable than the Armstrong case, shows Lincoln's readiness, out of mere sympathy for a friend in distress, to undertake the defense of one accused of crime. At a meeting of the bar in 1865, Mr. Linder (mentioned in a previous chapter) told of his first meeting with Abraham Lincoln at Charleston, Coles County, in 1835, and of their continued friendship thenceforward, despite partisan disagreements. Not long ago the former had been in great trouble on account of the indictment of his son for a homicide "in a part of the State where Lincoln was a tower of strength," and "where his arguments at law had more power than the instructions of the court."

“ I wrote to him,” continued Mr. Linder, “ giving him all the circumstances, telling him of my wife’s grief and my own, and soliciting that he would come and assist me to defend my son, though I feared he had been employed against him. . . . He condoled with us in our misfortune, and assured us that, no matter what business he might be engaged in, he would come, and that he was truly sorry that I had supposed he would take part in the prosecution of the son of a friend of his.” To the offer of a fee he replied that he knew no act of his that would justify the supposition “ that he would take money from a friend for assisting in the defense of a child.” The young man got clear, went South, and as a prisoner of war received further favors from the same benefactor in another capacity.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1858.

*The Lecompton Constitution — Another Democratic Schism  
— Lincoln a Candidate for Senator.*

Douglas undoubtedly wished Kansas promptly admitted and the annoyance fairly out of the way. The new Congress was strongly Democratic in both houses. A personal friend of Douglas from Illinois, John Calhoun, presided over the Constitutional Convention at Lecompton, and was actively concerned in the subsidiary work at the polls. The situation was at first altogether promising. But certain ugly facts ere long began to come into the light — sinister shapes, which no flimsy veil could screen. Before Congress met the public mind at the North had become deeply impressed with the conviction—shared by Senator Crittenden and other candid Southern men—that the Lecompton constitution was an intolerable imposition. Douglas himself could honestly have no other feeling. Still less could he be blind to the new dangers into which he was drifting.

The case did not come before Congress until early in February, when the President in a special message recommended the acceptance of the Lecompton constitution, and declared that Kansas was slave territory.



Douglas promptly announced his disagreement with the President, and soon after, in a set speech, declared against "forcing the constitution down the throats of the people of Kansas, in opposition to their wishes and in violation of our pledges." In spite of him the measure so denounced passed the Senate by a good majority, only two others of the forty Democratic Senators voting with him. In the House he had a better following, though not a large one. After a protracted struggle, lasting till the end of April (1858), Congress ordered a submission of the Lecompton constitution to the people of Kansas for their adoption or rejection. Conditions having so changed before the time appointed that a reasonably fair vote was possible, the Free-State men improved the opportunity, and the constitution was repudiated.

It is notable that for a time some prominent Republicans, including Henry Wilson and Horace Greeley, favored the adoption of Douglas as a party leader, and were ready to support his re-election to the Senate. In some of the Congressional districts, at the ensuing election, the Republicans helped to return Anti-Lecompton Democrats to the House, and the fusion was ultimately advantageous to the stronger party. The case was different as to one in the position of Douglas; and, at all events, this policy found little support among the Republicans of Illinois. The Democrats of that State, at their convention on the 21st of April, gave Douglas an unconditional indorsement. A few dissentients, indeed, some time later effected a nominal organization, claiming to be the genuine Administration party, and declaring for ex-Senator Breese as their candidate; but

their course rather helped than hurt Douglas in his canvass.

One finds it difficult to digest the stubborn truth that ardent and able anti-slavery men should be willing to follow as a heroic leader one who was indifferent whether slavery were voted up or voted down in Kansas, and all because — while he had been foremost in repealing the restriction which, if left alone, had already settled the question forever—he insisted merely that the voting should be fairly done. It is especially curious that Mr. Greeley — after both Lincoln and Douglas had ended all their work — near the close of his life not only avowed his active zeal in this direction, but also declared his unchanged opinion, that in 1858 the Republicans of Illinois should have aided in the re-election of Douglas instead of supporting Lincoln.

Congress sat until the 16th of June. This happened to be the date at which the Republican State Convention met at Springfield, and resolved that Abraham Lincoln was its first and only choice for United States Senator as the successor of Stephen A. Douglas. In the evening Lincoln addressed the convention, making one of his most famous speeches. Some passages specially noticed in the Lincoln-Douglas canvass are here given:

Gentlemen of the Convention:—If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far on into the fifth year, since a policy was initiated, with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided

against itself can not stand.” I believe this Government can not endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States — old as well as new — North as well as South.

Have we no tendency to the latter condition? Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination — piece of machinery, so to speak — compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted, but also let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief master-workers from the beginning. . . .

While the Nebraska bill was passing through Congress, a law case, involving the question of a negro’s freedom, by reason of his owner having voluntarily taken him first into a free State and then into a Territory covered by the Congressional prohibition, and held him as a slave — for a long time in each — was passing through the United States Circuit Court for the District of Missouri, and both Nebraska bill and lawsuit were brought to a decision in the same month of May, 1854. The negro’s name was “Dred Scott,” which name now designates the decision finally made in the case. Before the then next Presidential election the law case came to and was argued in the Supreme Court of the United States; but the decision of it was deferred until *after* the election. . . .

At length a squabble springs up between the President and the author of the Nebraska bill on the mere question of fact, whether the Lecompton constitution was or was not in any just sense made by the people of Kansas; and in that squabble the latter declares that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up.



. . . Why was the amendment, expressly declaring the right of the people to exclude slavery, voted down? Plainly enough now; the adoption of it would have spoiled the niche for the Dred Scott decision. Why was the court decision held up? Why even a Senator's individual opinion withheld till after the Presidential election? Plainly enough now; the speaking out then would have damaged the "perfectly free" argument upon which the election was to be carried. Why the outgoing President's felicitation on the indorsement? Why the delay of a re-argument? Why the incoming President's advance exhortation in favor of the decision? These things look like the cautious patting and petting of a spirited horse, preparatory to mounting him, when it is dreaded that he may give the rider a fall. And why the hasty after-indorsements of the decision by the President and others?

We can not absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of pre-concert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen — Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James, for instance — and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few — not omitting even scaffolding — or, if a single piece be lacking, we can see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared to yet bring such a piece in — in such case we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck. . . .

Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him. Whenever, if ever, he and we can come together on principle, so that our great cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But clearly he is not now with us, he does not pretend to be, he does not promise ever to be. Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its



own undoubted friends — those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work — who do care for the result.

He closed by saying: “Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now — now, when the same enemy is wavering, dissevered and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail — if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.”

After the adjournment of Congress, Douglas lingered more than three weeks at the East. He had carefully watched all preliminaries of the combat, and did not return unprovided with liberal campaign funds. Arriving in Chicago on the 9th of July, he had a triumphal entry, quite in contrast with his reception there four years before. Here, to be the last of his changing abodes, he had taken up his residence after being fairly launched on a national career. He now came to his home not only with the indorsement of the Democratic party of Illinois, but also with the prestige of a bold and successful conflict with the Democratic administration.

In response to the auspicious and inspiring homewelcome, he spoke at much length in his wonted bold, imperious manner. Lincoln was present to hear. Douglas claimed the merit of defeating the Lecompton

scheme, and patronizingly thanked the Republicans for "coming up manfully and sustaining" him in his work. At length he came to Lincoln's Springfield speech of the 16th of June:

I have observed from the public prints that but a few days ago the Republican party of the State of Illinois assembled in convention at Springfield, and not only laid down their platform, but nominated a candidate for the United States Senate as my successor. I take great pleasure in saying that I have known, personally and intimately, for about a quarter of a century, the worthy gentleman who has been nominated for my place, and I will say that I regard him as a kind, amiable and intelligent gentleman, a good citizen and an honorable opponent; and whatever issue I may have with him will be of principle, and not involving personalities. Mr. Lincoln made a speech before that Republican Convention which unanimously nominated him for the Senate — a speech evidently well prepared and carefully written — in which he states the basis upon which he proposes to carry on the campaign during this summer. In it he lays down two distinct propositions which I shall notice, and upon which I shall take a direct and bold issue with him.

His first and main proposition I will give in his own language, Scripture quotation and all; I give his exact language: "'A house divided against itself can not stand.' I believe this Government can not endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it to cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." In other words, Mr. Lincoln asserts, as a fundamental principle of this government, that there must be uniformity in the local laws and domestic institutions of each and all the States of the Union; and he therefore invites all the non-slaveholding States to band together, organize as one body, and make war upon slavery in Kentucky, upon slavery in Virginia, upon slavery in the Carolinas, upon slavery in all the slaveholding States in this Union, and to persevere in that war until it shall be exterminated. . . . Now, my friends, I must say to you frankly that I take bold, unequal-

ified issue with him upon that principle. I assert that it is neither desirable nor possible that there should be uniformity in the local institutions and domestic regulations of the different States of this Union. The framers of our government never contemplated uniformity in its internal concerns.

The other proposition discussed by Mr. Lincoln in his speech consists in a crusade against the Supreme Court of the United States on account of the Dred Scott decision. On this question, also, I desire to say to you unequivocally that I take direct and distinct issue with him. I have no warfare to make on the Supreme Court of the United States, either on account of that or any other decision which they have pronounced from that bench. . . . I have no idea of appealing from the decision of the Supreme Court upon a constitutional question to the decisions of a tumultuous town meeting. I am aware that once an eminent lawyer of this city, now no more, said that the State of Illinois had the most perfect judicial system in the world, subject to but one exception, which could be cured by a slight amendment, and that amendment was to so change the law as to allow an appeal from the decisions of the Supreme Court of Illinois, on all constitutional questions, to Justices of the Peace.

[“You were then on the Supreme Bench,” said Lincoln, quietly.]

My friend, Mr. Lincoln, who sits behind me, reminds me that the proposition was made when I was Judge of the Supreme Court. Be that as it may, I do not think that fact adds any greater weight or authority to the suggestion. . . . I am opposed to this doctrine of Mr. Lincoln, by which he proposes to take an appeal from the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, upon this high constitutional question, to a Republican caucus sitting in the country. Yes, or any other caucus or town meeting, whether it be Republican, American, or Democratic. I respect the decisions of that august tribunal; I shall always bow in deference to them. . . . He objects to the Dred Scott decision because it does not put the negro in the possession of the rights of citizenship on an equality with the white man. I am opposed to negro equality. . . . I am opposed to taking any step that recognizes the negro man or the Indian as the equal of the white man. I am opposed to giving him a voice in the



administration of the government. I would extend to the negro, and the Indian, and to all dependent races, every right, every privilege, and every immunity consistent with the safety and welfare of the white races; but equality they never should have, either political or social, or in any other respect whatever.

As some of Lincoln's friends had foretold, coupling the prophecy with a warning that was not heeded, Douglas had with alacrity seized upon the soon famous passage introduced with a scriptural quotation, as a basis for assuming the aggressive. On neither side was this matter dropped until the last speech of the canvass was ended.

From the same platform Lincoln replied on the next evening, the large audience receiving him with as hearty manifestations as Douglas had been received the night before. After reviewing the "popular sovereignty" eulogized by Douglas and illustrated in Kansas, Lincoln touched upon the claim set up by the Senator on the score of his opposition to the Lecompton scheme, and continued:

Judge Douglas made two points upon my recent speech at Springfield. He says they are to be the issues of this campaign. The first one of these points he bases upon the language in a speech which I delivered at Springfield, which I believe I can quote correctly from memory. . . . He says that I am in favor of making war by the North upon the South for the extinction of slavery; that I am also in favor of inviting, as he expresses it, the South to a war upon the North for the purpose of nationalizing slavery. Now, it is singular enough, if you will carefully read that passage over, that I did not say that I was in favor of anything in it. I only said what I expected would take place. I made a prediction only—it may have been a foolish one perhaps. I did not even say that I desired that slavery should be put



in course of ultimate extinction. I do say so now, however, so there need be no longer any difficulty about that. It may be written down in the next speech. . . . I have always hated slavery, I think, as much as any Abolitionist. I have been an Old-Line Whig. I have always hated it, but I have always been quiet about it until this new era of the introduction of the Nebraska bill began. I always believed that everybody was against it, and that it was in course of ultimate extinction. . . . I have said a hundred times, and I have no inclination to take it back, that I believe there is no right, and ought to be no inclination in the people of the free States to enter into the slave States and to interfere with the question of slavery at all. I have said that always. . . .

A little now on the other point — the Dred Scott decision. . . . What is fairly implied by the term Judge Douglas has used, "resistance to the decision"? I do not resist it. If I wanted to take Dred Scott from his master, I would be interfering with property. I am doing no such thing as that, but all that I am doing is refusing to obey it as a political rule. If I were in Congress, and a vote should come up on a question whether slavery should be prohibited in a new territory, in spite of the Dred Scott decision, I would vote that it should. . . . We let this property abide by the decision, but we will try to reverse that decision. We will try to put it where Judge Douglas will not object, for he says he will obey it until it is reversed. Somebody has to reverse that decision, since it was made, and we mean to reverse it, and we mean to do it peaceably.

After commenting on Douglas's view of the Declaration of Independence — substantially as at Springfield the previous year — Lincoln continued:

My friend has said to me that I am a poor hand to quote Scripture. I will try it again, however. It is said in one of the admonitions of our Lord: "As your Father in heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect." The Savior, I suppose, did not expect that any human creature could be perfect as the Father in heaven, but he said: "As your Father in heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect." He set that up as a standard, and he who did most toward reaching that standard attained

the highest degree of moral perfection. So I say in relation to the principle that all men are created equal, let it be as nearly reached as we can. If we can not give freedom to every creature, let us do nothing to impose slavery upon any other creature. Let us, then, turn this Government back into the channel in which the framers of the Constitution originally placed it. . . . Turning in the contrary direction that our friend Judge Douglas proposes — not intentionally — . . . tends to make this one universal slave nation. He is one that runs in that direction, and as such I resist him.

The two Chicago speeches and that of Lincoln at Springfield in June present the chief subjects of the campaign. Douglas could not, of course, neglect to appear early at the State capital, and on his way thither he spoke at Bloomington, and was again listened to by his competitor. The Senator's speech at Springfield on the 17th had much resemblance to his "key-note" at Chicago. Lincoln also spoke there on the same day, at night, without having heard Douglas in the afternoon. His opening remarks pointed out some of the unequal conditions of the contest:

. . . . In the first place, we have a Legislature to elect upon an apportionment of the representation made several years ago, when the proportion of the population was far greater in the south, as compared with the north, than it now is; and inasmuch as our opponents hold almost entire sway in the south, and we a correspondingly large majority in the north, the fact that we are now to be represented as we were years ago, when the population was different, is to me a very great disadvantage. . . .

Proceeding to the methods and plans of his competitor, he said:

After Senator Douglas left Washington, as his movements were made known by the public prints, he tarried a

considerable time in the city of New York; and it was heralded that, like another Napoleon, he was lying by and framing the plan of his campaign. . . . What I shall point out, though not showing the whole plan, are, nevertheless, the main points, as I suppose. They are not very numerous. The first is Popular Sovereignty. The second and third are attacks upon my speech made on the 16th of June. . . . Upon these his successive speeches are substantially one and the same. . . . Auxiliary to these main points, to be sure, are their thunderings of cannon, their marching and music, their fizzle-gigs and fireworks; but I will not waste time with them. They are but the little trappings of the campaign. . . .

Judge Douglas said, at Bloomington, that I used language most able and ingenious for concealing what I really meant; and that, while I had protested against entering into the slave States, I nevertheless did mean to go on the banks of the Ohio and throw missiles into Kentucky, to disturb the people there in their domestic institutions. I said in that speech, and I meant no more, that the institution of slavery ought to be placed in the very attitude where the framers of this Government placed it, and left it. I do not understand that the framers of our Constitution left the people of the free States in the attitude of firing bombs or shells into the slave States. . . .

Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, in one of his speeches, when they were presenting him canes, silver plate, gold pitchers and the like, for assaulting Senator Sumner, distinctly affirmed his opinion that when this Constitution was formed, it was the belief of no man that slavery would last to the present day. He said, what I think, that the framers of our Constitution placed the institution of slavery where the public mind rested in the hope that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. But he went on to say that the men of the present age, by their experience, have become wiser than the framers of the Constitution; and the invention of the cotton-gin had made the perpetuity of slavery a necessity in this country.

Recurring to the Dred Scott case, he cited Jefferson's views on judicial decisions, alluded to the course



of the Democratic party and of Douglas personally, in regard to the National Bank decision, and concluded:

Judge Douglas is *for* Supreme Court decisions when he likes, and against them when he does not like them. He is for the Dred Scott decision because it tends to nationalize slavery — because it is a part of the original combination for that object. It so happened, singularly enough, that I never stood opposed to a decision of the Supreme Court till this. On the contrary, I have no recollection that he was ever particularly in favor of one till this. He never was in favor of any, nor I opposed to any, till the present one, which helps to nationalize slavery. Free men of Sangamon — free men of Illinois — free men everywhere — judge ye between him and me upon this issue.

It was not until the last of July that on Lincoln's challenge Douglas agreed to a series of joint meetings — one in each of the seven Congressional districts in which they had not yet spoken during the present canvass.

It may be presumed that many of Lincoln's friends, who knew the skill and ability of Douglas in debate especially, regarded the challenge as a bold, if not a rash one. The two were unlike in their methods. As his opponent said of him, Lincoln was "conscientious," and his candor seemed at times to place him at a disadvantage with a wily antagonist; nor had he the practical readiness in face-to-face discussion, for which the other was distinguished. Lincoln was not alone in thinking the Senator a somewhat unscrupulous opponent in a pressing emergency. Often overbearing in his manner, conscious of the superior position his better fortune in politics had gained for him, and impressed now with a lively sense of the consequences of defeat, he would cer-



tainly spare no available resource in this contest. But he had shown no alacrity in consenting to a joint canvass, even the partial one granted; nor did he think Lincoln's challenge mere "banter," as at one of their later meetings, when in a rather exasperated mood, he seemed to insinuate. He knew Lincoln better than some other politicians did, and though not lacking in self-confidence, was possibly not quite sure that anything would be gained on his part by accepting the challenge.

Speaking separately for the next three weeks, each of course went over the same ground substantially as at Chicago and Springfield.

## CHAPTER XIV.

AUGUST - OCTOBER, 1858.

### *The Lincoln - Douglas Debate.*

At the first joint meeting, August 21st, at Ottawa, in the strongly anti-slavery district represented by Owen Lovejoy, Douglas led off in the line of talk into which, after his opening at Chicago, he habitually struck when choosing his own course, or when he wanted an easy road to fall back upon. This was his starting point: "Prior to 1854 this country was divided into two great political parties, known as the Whig and the Democratic parties. Both were national and patriotic, advocating principles that were universal in their application. . . . In 1854, Mr. Abraham Lincoln and Mr. Trumbull entered into an arrangement, one with the other, and each with his respective friends, to dissolve the old Whig party on the one hand, and to dissolve the old Democratic party on the other, and to connect the members of both into an Abolition party, under the name and disguise of a Republican party. The terms of that arrangement between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Trumbull . . . were, that Lincoln should have Shields's place in the United States Senate, which was then about to become vacant, and that Trumbull should have my seat when my term expired. . . . In pursuance of the arrangement, the parties met at Springfield in October,

1854, and proclaimed their new platform. I have the resolutions of their State Convention then held, which was the first State Convention ever held in Illinois by the Black Republican party, and I now hold them in my hands, and will read a part of them, and cause the others to be printed."

The resolutions thus produced were not those adopted by the "first State Convention," (which met at Bloomington in 1856,) nor were they adopted in 1854 at Springfield, as alleged, but at a local convention held much farther north. On the erroneous assumption made, Douglas proceeded to interrogate his opponent as to his position on the fugitive slave law, the admission of new slave States, and so forth, and added: "I ask Abraham Lincoln to answer these questions, in order that when I trot him down to lower Egypt I may put the same questions to him. . . . I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln's principles will bear transporting from Ottawa to Jonesboro. I put these questions to him to-day distinctly, and ask an answer." Then came the following personalities:

In the remarks I have made on this platform, and the position of Mr. Lincoln upon it, I mean nothing personally disrespectful or unkind to that gentleman. I have known him for nearly twenty-five years. There were many points of sympathy between us when we first got acquainted. We were both comparatively boys, and both struggling with poverty in a strange land. I was a school teacher in the town of Winchester, and he a flourishing grocery-keeper in the town of Salem. He was more successful in his occupation than I was in mine, and hence more fortunate in this world's goods. Lincoln is one of those peculiar men who perform with admirable skill everything which they undertake. I made as good a school teacher as I could, and when a cabi-

net-maker I made a good bedstead and tables, although my old boss said I succeeded better with bureaus and secretaries than with anything else; but I believe that Lincoln was always more successful in business than I, for his business enabled him to get into the Legislature. I met him there, however, and had a sympathy with him, because of the up-hill struggle we both had in life. He was then just as good at telling an anecdote as now. He could beat any of the boys at wrestling, or running a foot-race, in pitching quoits or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all the boys of the town together, and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse-race or fist-fight excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody that was present and participating. I sympathized with him, because he was struggling with difficulties, and so was I. Mr. Lincoln served with me in the Legislature in 1836, when we both retired, and he subsided, or became submerged, and he was lost sight of as a public man for some years. In 1846, when Wilmot introduced his celebrated proviso, and the Abolition tornado swept over the country, Lincoln again turned up as a member of Congress from the Sangamon district. I was then in the Senate of the United States, and was glad to welcome my old friend and companion. Whilst in Congress he distinguished himself by his opposition to the Mexican war, taking the side of the common enemy against his own country; and when he returned home he found that the indignation of the people followed him everywhere, and he was again submerged or obliged to retire into private life, forgotten by his former friends. He came up again in 1854, just in time to make this Abolition or Black Republican platform, in company with Giddings, Lovejoy, Chase and Fred. Douglass, for the Republican party to stand upon. Trumbull, too, was one of our own contemporaries. He was born and raised in old Connecticut, was bred a Federalist, but removing to Georgia, turned Nullifier, when nullification was popular, and as soon as he disposed of his clocks and wound up his business, migrated to Illinois, turned politician and lawyer here, and made his appearance in 1841 as a member of the Legislature.

Following this biographic fancy-work came the inev-



itable onslaught on the 16th of June speech, with more of the spice of caricature and badinage:

We are told by Lincoln that he is utterly opposed to the Dred Scott decision, and will not submit to it, for the reason that he says it deprives the negro of the rights and privileges of citizenship. . . . I ask you, are you in favor of conferring upon the negro the rights and privileges of citizenship? Do you desire to strike out of our State Constitution that clause which keeps slaves and free negroes out of the State, and allow the free negroes to flow in, and cover your prairies with black settlements? Do you desire to turn this beautiful State into a free negro colony, in order that when Missouri abolishes slavery she can send one hundred thousand emancipated slaves into Illinois, to become citizens and voters, on an equality with yourselves? . . . For one, I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. I believe this Government was made on the white basis. I believe it was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men, men of European birth and descent, instead of conferring it upon negroes, Indians and other inferior races. Mr. Lincoln, following the example and lead of all the little Abolition orators, who go around and lecture in the basements of schools and churches, reads from the Declaration of Independence that all men were created equal, and then asks, How can you deprive a negro of that equality which God and the Declaration of Independence award to him? I do not question Mr. Lincoln's conscientious belief that the negro was made his equal, and hence is his brother; but for my own part, I do not regard the negro as my equal, and positively deny that he is my brother or any kin to me whatever. . . . I believe that this new doctrine preached by Mr. Lincoln and his party will dissolve the Union if it succeeds.

Douglas having filled his hour, Lincoln began:

When a man hears himself somewhat misrepresented, it provokes him — at least, I find it so with myself; but when misrepresentation becomes very gross and palpable, it is more apt to amuse him. The first thing I see fit to notice

is the fact that Judge Douglas alleges, after running through the history of the old Democratic and the old Whig parties, that Judge Trumbull and myself made an arrangement in 1854 by which I was to have the place of General Shields in the United States Senate, and Judge Trumbull was to have the place of Judge Douglas. Now, all I have to say upon that subject is, that I think no man — not even Judge Douglas — can prove it, because it is not true. I have no doubt he is “conscientious” in saying it. As to those resolutions that he took such a length of time to read, as being the platform of the Republican party in 1854, I say I never had anything to do with them, and I think Trumbull never had. Judge Douglas can not show that either of us ever did have anything to do with them. . . . Now, gentlemen, I hate to waste my time on such things, but in regard to that general Abolition tilt that Judge Douglas makes, when he says that I was engaged at that time in selling out and abolitionizing the old Whig party — I hope you will permit me to read a part of a printed speech that I made then at Peoria, which will show altogether a different view of the position I took in that contest of 1854. . . . This is the whole of it, and anything that argues me into his idea of perfect social and political equality with the negro is but a specious and fantastic arrangement of words, by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse. I will say here, while upon this subject, that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races. . . .

Now I pass on to consider one or two more of these little follies. The Judge is woefully at fault about his early friend Lincoln being a “grocery-keeper.” I don’t know as it would be a great sin if I had been; but he is mistaken. Lincoln never kept a grocery anywhere in the world. It is true that Lincoln did work the latter part of one winter in a little still-house, up at the head of a hollow. And so I think my friend, the Judge, is equally at fault when he charges me at the time when I was in Congress of having opposed our soldiers who were fighting in the Mexican war.

He then gave some attention to his opponent's construction of the "house divided" feature of the speech of June 16th, replying substantially as on previous occasions, and in one sentence giving a key to his purpose: "My main object was to show, so far as my humble ability was capable of showing, to the people of this country what I believed was the truth, that there was a tendency, if not a conspiracy, among those who have engineered the slavery question for the last four or five years, to make slavery perpetual and universal in this nation." As incidental to this "main object" he had added a "bit of comment" containing the illustration of "Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James," working together in building a house, with the signs of preconcert to be found in the exact fitting of tenons and mortises, and so forth; to which Douglas, when "he took hold of this speech" at Chicago, paid no attention at all, but complimented him as being a "kind, amiable, and intelligent gentleman," whereby he was a little "taken," coming as it did "from a great man." "I was not very much accustomed to flattery," Lincoln said, "and it came the sweeter to me. I was rather like the Hoosier with the gingerbread, when he said he reckoned he loved it better than any other man, and got less of it."

He next spoke at some length of the effect and intent of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in combination with the Dred-Scott decision, concluding:

Henry Clay, my beau ideal of a statesman, the man for whom I fought all my humble life — Henry Clay once said of a class of men who would repress all tendencies to liberty and ultimate emancipation, that they must, if they would



do this, go back to the era of our Independence and muzzle the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return; they must blow out the moral lights around us; they must penetrate the human soul and eradicate there the love of liberty; and then, and not till then, could they perpetuate slavery in this country! To my thinking, Judge Douglas is, by his example and vast influence, doing that very thing in this community when he says that the negro has nothing in the Declaration of Independence. Henry Clay plainly understood the contrary. . . . And now I will only say that when, by all these means and appliances, Judge Douglas shall succeed in bringing public sentiment to an exact accordance with his own views, . . . then it needs only the formality of the second Dred Scott decision, which he indorses in advance, to make slavery alike lawful in all the States — old as well as new, North as well as South.

In his half-hour response Douglas wasted further time on the spurious "Republican platform," which had figured so largely in his opening speech. Of the "conspiracy" charge Douglas remarked:

He says he will repeat it until I answer his folly and nonsense about Stephen, and Franklin, and Roger, and Bob, and James. He studied that out — prepared that one sentence with the greatest care, committed it to memory, and put it in his first Springfield speech, and now he carries that speech around and reads that sentence to show how pretty it is. His vanity is wounded because I will not go into that beautiful figure of his about the building of a house. All I have to say is, that I am not green enough to let him make a charge which he acknowledges he does not know to be true, and then take up my time in answering it, when I know it to be false and nobody else knows it to be true. . . . What does Mr. Lincoln propose? He says that the Union can not exist divided into free and slave States. If it can not endure thus divided, then he must strive to make them all free or all slave, which will inevitably bring about a dissolution of the Union.

So ended the Ottawa debate. Lincoln wrote next,



day to a friend: "There was a vast concourse of people — more than could get near enough to hear." A majority were Republicans, very enthusiastic for their candidate, and at the close he was borne on stout shoulders from the platform.

Freeport, the place of their next meeting (August 27th), was in a region where, as in the Ottawa district, even the "regular" Democrats had repeatedly indorsed what Douglas was now calling Abolition sentiments. The opening was made lively and picturesque by the arrival of the Little Giant in a gay barouche drawn by four white horses and loudly greeted by the throng; and still wilder applause hailed the advent of Lincoln, whose chariot was a plain "prairie schooner." This occasion is chiefly memorable for one of the series of questions propounded to Douglas and for the answer given, which bore on his subsequent career with the power of inexorable fate.

After some preliminary remarks, Lincoln said of the questions asked him at Ottawa: "I now propose that I will answer any of the interrogatories upon condition that he will answer questions from me not exceeding the same number. I give him an opportunity to respond. The Judge remains silent. I now say that I will answer his interrogatories, whether he answers mine or not; and that after I have done so, I shall propound mine to him."

He then read the seven questions of Douglas, answering in substance that he was not and never had been committed (1) to the unconditional repeal of the fugitive slave law; or (2) against the admission of any

more slave States into the Union; or (3) against the admission of a new State into the Union, with such a Constitution as the people of that State may see fit to make; or (4) in favor of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; or (5) in favor of prohibiting the slave-trade between the different States. He was (6) "impliedly, if not expressly, pledged to a belief in the right and duty of Congress to prohibit slavery in all the United States Territories"; and (7) was not generally opposed to honest acquisition of territory; and, in any given case, would or would not oppose such acquisition, according as he might think such acquisition would or would not agitate the slavery question among ourselves.

After a fuller expression of his views on some of these points, he propounded four questions to Douglas, as follows:

Question 1. If the people of Kansas shall, by means entirely unobjectionable in all other respects, adopt a State Constitution, and ask admission into the Union under it, before they have the requisite number of inhabitants according to the English bill—some ninety-three thousand—would you vote to admit them?

Question 2. Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits?

Question 3. If the Supreme Court of the United States shall decide that States can not exclude slavery from their limits, are you in favor of acquiescing in, adopting and following such decisions as a rule of action?

Question 4. Are you in favor of acquiring additional territory in disregard of how such acquisition may affect the nation on the slavery question?

There were friends of Lincoln to whom he showed these questions in advance, who told him an affirmative

answer would unhesitatingly be given to the second one, regardless of any effect except upon the pending contest — to Douglas the vital interest of the moment — trusting to his own skill in making peace with the South afterward. These anxious advisers thought they had persuaded him to drop it, and (as one of them said to the writer a year or two later\*) were “thunderstruck” when they heard the question read from the stand, feeling that this insured their candidate’s defeat.

When Douglas in his response came to this interrogatory, he read it with assurance and exultation in his voice, promptly answered in the affirmative, and was “immensely applauded.” It seemed as if this were just the opportunity he had longed for. “It matters not,” he said, “what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question as to whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to introduce it or exclude it, as they please, for the reason that slavery can not exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by local police regulations. Those police regulations can only be established by the local Legislature, and if the people are opposed to slavery, they will elect representatives to that body who will, by unfriendly legislation, effectually prevent the introduction of it into their midst. If, on the contrary, they are for it, their legislation will favor its extension. Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be on that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a slave Territory or a free Territory is perfect and com-

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\*The late Hon. Joseph Medill, of the *Chicago Tribune*.

plete under the Nebraska bill. I hope Mr. Lincoln deems my answer satisfactory on that point."

Lincoln's questioning brought so explicit and direct an answer at this time — in spite of the Supreme Court's decision—as to make a positive impression at the South. Douglas in vain tried afterward to remove it — even quoting from a speech made by Jefferson Davis in Maine, before the Kansas-Nebraska act was passed, as sustaining his own view. He was not forgiven, and on no one did his Freeport avowal take effect more adversely to Douglas than upon Jefferson Davis himself. By forcing Douglas to commit himself upon this question in exact terms, Lincoln counted on widening the breach in the Democratic party to the advantage of the Republican cause, whatever the first effect on himself. His sagacity in this will not now be disputed.

The other three questions have no interest in comparison with the second. In replying to the first one, Douglas said he preferred that no Territory should be admitted as a State without a population equal to that fixed as the ratio of representation, but numbers sufficient for a slave State were sufficient for a free State; and Kansas having been offered admission under the Lecompton constitution with only about one-third of such population, he would consent to its admission without increase as a free State. As to the third question, he scouted the idea of any such possibility as it implied, and gave no direct answer. As to acquiring any additional territory regardless of slavery (the fourth question), he answered that "whenever it becomes necessary, in due growth and progress, to acquire more territory," he was "in favor of it, without reference to the



question of slavery," leaving the people "free to do as they please, either to make it slave or free territory, as they prefer." With the zeal of an ardent expansionist he concluded on this point:

I tell you, increase and multiply and expand, is the law of this nation's existence. You can not limit this great Republic by mere boundary lines, saying, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." Any one of you gentlemen might as well say to a son twelve years old that he is big enough, and must not grow any larger, and in order to prevent his growth put a hoop around him to keep him to his present size. What would be the result? Either the hoop must burst and be rent asunder, or the child must die. So it would be with this great nation. With our natural increase, growing with a rapidity unknown in any other part of the globe, with the tide of emigration that is fleeing from despotism in the old world to seek refuge in our own, there is a constant torrent pouring into this country that requires more land, more territory upon which to settle, and just as fast as our interests and our destiny require additional territory in the North, in the South, or on the islands of the ocean, I am for it, and when we acquire it, will leave the people, according to the Nebraska bill, free to do as they please on the subject of slavery and every other question.

The four interrogatories being disposed of, he assumed the defensive in regard to his spurious Republican State platform. Conceding that he had been in error, he sought to throw the responsibility on the editor of the Democratic organ at Springfield; but still used a great deal of special pleading to show that the resolutions of an Anti-Nebraska convention in Kane County, long before the Republican party was organized in Illinois, somehow compromised Lincoln.

In his rejoinder Lincoln said on this subject:

At the introduction of the Nebraska policy we believed there was a new era being introduced in the history of the

Republic which tended to the spread and perpetuation of slavery. But in our opposition to that measure we did not agree with one another in everything. . . . We at last met together in 1856, from all parts of the State, and we agreed upon a platform. . . . And I say here to you, if any one expects of me — in the case of my election — that I will do anything not signified by our Republican platform and my answers here to-day, I tell you very frankly, that person will be deceived. I do not ask for the vote of any one who supposes that I have secret purposes or pledges that I dare not speak out. Can not the Judge be satisfied? . . . I tell you what he is afraid of. He is afraid we'll all pull together. This is what alarms him more than anything else. For my part, I do hope that all of us entertaining a common sentiment in opposition to what appears to us a design to nationalize and perpetuate slavery will waive minor differences on questions which either belong to the dead past or the distant future, and all pull together in this struggle.

The most notable new point made in this closing half-hour speech was in connection with his rejoinder to the attempt of Douglas to explain away a speech of his in the Senate, construed by Lincoln as charging the Administration with aiming a "fatal blow" at the sovereignty of the States. After presenting documentary evidence in regard to the "fatal blow" feature of the Lecompton quarrel, Lincoln continued:

But the Judge's eye is farther south now. Then it was very peculiarly and decidedly north. His hope rested on the idea of visiting the great "Black Republican" party and making it the tail of his new kite. He knows he was then expecting from day to day to turn Republican and place himself at the head of our organization. He has found that these despised "Black Republicans" estimate him by a standard which he has taught them none too well. Hence he is crawling back into his old camp, and you will find him eventually installed in full fellowship among those

whom he was then battling, and with whom he now pretends to be at such fearful variance.

The third joint discussion, on the 15th of September, was at Jonesboro — fairly “down in Egypt” at last. Douglas led off with his “Prior to 1854 this country was divided into two great political parties,” and so forth, continuing on this line until he digressed to say of his opponents in the Anti-Nebraska canvass of the year named:

They were Republicans or Abolitionists in the North, anti-Nebraska men down about Springfield, and in this neighborhood they contented themselves with talking about the inexpediency of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. In the extreme northern counties they brought out men to canvass the State whose complexions suited their political creed, and hence Fred Douglass, the negro, was to be found there, following General Cass, and attempting to speak on behalf of Lincoln, Trumbull and Abolitionism against that illustrious Senator. Why, they brought Fred Douglas to Freeport, when I was addressing a meeting there, in a carriage driven by the white owner, the negro sitting inside with the white lady and her daughter. When I got through canvassing the northern counties that year, and progressed as far south as Springfield, I was met and opposed in discussion by Lincoln, Lovejoy, Trumbull and Sidney Breese, who were on one side. Father Giddings, the high-priest of Abolitionism, had just been there, and Chase came about the time I left.

Again resuming his staple speech for a while, he came to the Republican State Convention of the previous June, and went on through the old criticism of Lincoln’s speech on that occasion. This brought the Senator to the close of his hour. In his reply Lincoln said at the outset:

There is very much in the principles that Judge Douglas has here enunciated that I most cordially approve, and over



which I shall have no controversy with him. In so far as he has insisted that all the States have the right to do exactly as they please about all their domestic relations, including that of slavery, I agree entirely with him. He places me wrong in spite of all I can tell him, though I repeat it again and again, insisting that I have no difference with him upon this subject. I have made a great many speeches, some of which have been printed, and it will be utterly impossible for him to find anything that I have ever put in print contrary to what I now say upon this subject.

As to the indorsement of the Compromise of 1850 by the Whigs as a finality, he said:

I understand the Judge to be altogether right about that ; I understand that part of the history of the country as stated by him to be correct. I recollect that I, as a member of that party, acquiesced in that Compromise. I recollect in the Presidential election which followed, when we had General Scott up for the Presidency, Judge Douglas was around berating us Whigs as Abolitionists, precisely as he does to-day — not a bit of difference. I have often heard him. We could do nothing when the old Whig party was alive that was not Abolitionism ; but it has got an extremely good name since it has passed away. . . . I have the report that Judge Douglas first brought into Congress at the time of the introduction of the Nebraska bill, which in its original form did not repeal the Missouri Compromise, and he there expressly stated that he had foreborne to do so because it had not been done by the Compromise of 1850. I close this part of the discussion on my part by asking him the question again, "Why, when we had peace under the Missouri Compromise, could you not have let it alone?"

He then replied briefly to the onslaught on his 16th of June speech, and proceeded to notice his opponent's continual hammering at a set of extreme anti-slavery resolutions with which neither Lincoln nor the Republican party as such had anything to do. As a fair set-off to what was in itself so unfair, he produced the



equally radical commitments of two regular Democratic Congressional candidates in Northern Illinois, even in 1850 — both these candidates being personal friends of Douglas, both later helped by him to Federal offices, and both to-day supporting him. He also cited “a set of resolutions passed by a Democratic State Convention in Judge Douglas’s own good old State of Vermont, that,” said Lincoln, “I think ought to be good for him, too” — resolutions declaring that “liberty is a right inherent and inalienable in man, and that herein all men are equal”; that slavery should be prohibited in the Territories and abolished in the District of Columbia; “that no more slave States should be admitted into the Federal Union,” and “that the Government ought to return to its ancient policy, not to extend, nationalize, or encourage, but to limit, localize, and discourage slavery.”

He also gave considerable time to exposing the inconsistencies to which Douglas had committed himself by his answer to the second Freeport question, and subsequently added a fifth question — touching a vital point:

Question 5. If the slave-holding citizens of a United States Territory should need and demand Congressional legislation for the protection of their slave property in such Territory, would you, as a member of Congress, vote for or against such legislation?

Noticing some bantering remarks of Douglas at Joliet, after the Freeport meeting, Lincoln continued:

There is another thing . . . that alarmed me very greatly — as he states it — that he was going to “trot me down to Egypt.” Thereby he would have you to infer that

I would not come to Egypt unless he forced me — that I could not be got there, unless he, giant-like, had hauled me down there. That statement he makes, too, in the teeth of the knowledge that I had made the stipulation to come down here, and that he himself had been very reluctant to enter into the stipulation. . . . Why, I know this people better than he does. I was raised just a little east of here. I am a part of this people. But the Judge was raised further north, and perhaps he has some horrid idea of what this people might be induced to do. But really I have talked about this matter perhaps longer than I ought, for it is no great thing, and yet the smallest are often the most difficult things to deal with.

The most interesting part of the closing speech of Douglas at Jonesboro was the reply to Lincoln's fifth question — with its preceding bit of autobiography:

Mr. Lincoln attempts to cover up and get over his Abolitionism by telling you that he was raised a little east of you, beyond the Wabash in Indiana, and he thinks that makes a mighty sound and good man of him on all these questions. I do not know that the place where a man is born or raised has much to do with his political principles. The worst Abolitionists I have ever known in Illinois have been men who have sold their slaves in Alabama and Kentucky, and have come here and turned Abolitionists whilst spending the money they got for the negroes they sold, and I do not know that an Abolitionist from Indiana or Kentucky ought to have any more credit because he was born and raised among the slave-holders. . . . True, I was not born out West here. I was born away down in Yankee land, I was born in a valley in Vermont, with the high mountains around me. I love the old green mountains and valleys of Vermont, where I was born, and where I played in my childhood. I went up to visit them some seven or eight years ago for the first time for twenty-odd years. When I got there they treated me very kindly. They invited me to the Commencement of their college, placed me on the seats with their distinguished guests, and conferred upon me the degree of LL.D. in Latin (Doctor of Laws) the same as they did

old Hickory, at Cambridge, many years ago, and I give you my word and honor I understood just as much of the Latin as he did. When they got through conferring the honorary degree, they called upon me for a speech, and I got up with my heart full and swelling with gratitude for their kindness, and I said to them: "My friends, Vermont is the most glorious spot on the face of this globe for a man to be born in, provided he emigrates when he is very young." I emigrated when I was very young. I came out here when I was a boy, and I found my mind liberalized, and my opinions enlarged when I got on these broad prairies, with only the heavens to bound my vision, instead of having them circumscribed by the little narrow ridges that surrounded the valley where I was born. But I discard all flings of the land where a man was born. I wish to be judged by my principles, by those great public measures and constitutional principles upon which the peace, the happiness and the perpetuity of this Republic now rest.

Mr. Lincoln has framed another question, propounded it to me, and desired my answer. . . . It is as follows: "If the slave-holding citizens of a United States Territory should need and demand Congressional legislation for the protection of their slave property in such Territory, would you, as a member of Congress, vote for or against such legislation?" I answer him that it is a fundamental article in the Democratic creed that there should be non-interference and non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States or Territories. Mr. Lincoln could have found an answer to his question in the Cincinnati platform, if he had desired it. The Democratic party have always stood by that great principle of non-interference and non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the States and Territories alike, and I stand on that platform now.

The matter was to be heard from further in a certain convention, ere long to assemble at Charleston, South Carolina. The Senator's answer, like that to Lincoln's second question at Freeport, found record in the Southern note-book.

The champions had their fourth encounter three



days later at Charleston, in Coles County. The audience was a very large one, and after requesting that "as profound silence be observed as possible," Lincoln said:

While I was at the hotel to-day an elderly gentleman called upon me to know whether I was really in favor of producing a perfect equality between the negroes and white people. While I had not proposed to myself on this occasion to say much on that subject, yet as the question was asked me I thought I will occupy perhaps five minutes in saying something in regard to it. I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races—that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they can not so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race. I say upon this occasion I do not perceive that because the white man is to have the superior position the negro should be denied everything. I do not understand that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave, I must necessarily want her for a wife. My understanding is that I can just let her alone. I am now in my fiftieth year, and I certainly never have had a black woman for either a slave or a wife. So it seems to me quite possible for us to get along without either making slaves or wives of negroes. I will add to this that I have never seen, to my knowledge, a man, woman or child who was in favor of producing a perfect equality, social and political, between negroes and white men. . . .

The remainder of the speech must have been rather a surprise, inasmuch as Lincoln, having the opening, devoted his time chiefly to a question that had arisen between Senators Trumbull and Douglas during this



canvass, concerning the latter's action in regard to certain Kansas-Nebraska legislation, and about matters growing out of this controversy. It had become an angry wrangle, in which harsh words had been used, and Lincoln came to the support of Trumbull with documentary evidence. Douglas, disconcerted and angry, made a reply that was evidently not very satisfactory to himself, and presently turned to his story of the two parties "prior to 1854." Nor is there in Lincoln's rejoinder any new matter that is specially memorable.

The fifth discussion was at Galesburg, in a more northern latitude, on the 7th of October. Douglas had the opening, and plied his flail with the usual vigor to the oft-beaten straw. He was aggressive and adroit, making one of his ablest speeches to an audience more largely in sympathy with his opponent than he had faced at the last two meetings. Lincoln began by saying: "A very large portion of the speech which Judge Douglas has addressed to you has previously been delivered and put in print." The audience laughed and cheered, but he continued: "I do not mean that for a hit upon the Judge at all. If I had not been interrupted, I was going to say that such an answer as I was able to make to a very large portion of it had already been more than once made and published."

I make these remarks [he continued] for the purpose of excusing myself for not passing over the entire ground that the Judge has traversed. . . . I believe the entire records of the world, from the date of the Declaration of Independence up to within three years ago, may be searched in vain for one single affirmation, from one single man, that the negro was not included in the Declaration of Independence; I think I may defy Judge Douglas to show that

he ever said so, that Washington ever said so, that any President ever said so, that any member of Congress ever said so, or that any living man upon the whole earth ever said so, until the necessities of the present policy of the Democratic party, in regard to slavery, had to invent that affirmation. And I will remind Judge Douglas and this audience that while Mr. Jefferson was the owner of slaves, as undoubtedly he was, in speaking upon this very subject, he used the strong language that "he trembled for his country when he remembered that God was just;" and I will offer the highest premium in my power to Judge Douglas if he will show that he, in all his life, ever uttered a sentiment at all akin to that of Jefferson. . . .

We have a Republican State platform, laid down in Springfield in June last, stating our position all the way through the questions before the country. We are now far advanced in this canvass. Judge Douglas and I have made perhaps forty speeches apiece, and we have now for the fifth time met face to face in debate, and up to this day I have not found either Judge Douglas or any friend of his taking hold of the Republican platform or laying his finger upon anything in it that is wrong. I ask you all to recollect that.

Coming immediately after this are the following quite suggestive and even singularly prophetic words:

Judge Douglas turns away from the platform of principles to the fact that he can find people somewhere who will not allow us to announce those principles. If he had great confidence that our principles were wrong, he would take hold of them and demonstrate them to be wrong. But he does not do so. The only evidence he has of their being wrong is in the fact that there are people who won't allow us to preach them. I ask again, Is that the way to test the soundness of a doctrine? I ask his attention also to the fact that by the rule of nationality he is himself fast becoming sectional. I ask his attention to the fact that his speeches would not go as current now south of the Ohio River as they have formerly gone there. I ask his attention to the fact that he felicitates himself to-day that all the

Democrats of the free States are agreeing with him, while he omits to tell us that the Democrats of any slave State agree with him. If he has not thought of this, I commend to his consideration the evidence in his own declaration, on this day, of his becoming sectional too. I see it rapidly approaching. Whatever may be the result of this ephemeral contest between Judge Douglas and myself, I see the day rapidly approaching when his pill of sectionalism, which he has been thrusting down the throats of Republicans for years past, will be crowded down his own throat.

At Quincy, October 13th, Lincoln went over the chief points of controversy with a calm strength, precision, and force, unsurpassed in any previous effort. The fundamental differences between the respective attitudes of the two combatants were never brought out by him more pointedly, in few words, than in the following passages:

We have in this nation this element of domestic slavery. It is a matter of absolute certainty that it is a disturbing element. It is the opinion of all great men who have expressed an opinion upon it that it is a dangerous element. We keep up a controversy in regard to it. That controversy necessarily springs from difference of opinion, and if we can learn exactly — can reduce to the lowest elements — what that difference of opinion is, we perhaps shall be better prepared for discussing the different systems of policy that we would propose in regard to that disturbing element. I suggest that the difference of opinion, reduced to its lowest terms, is no other than the difference between the men who think slavery wrong and those who do not think it wrong. The Republican party think it wrong — we think it a moral, a social and a political wrong. We think it a wrong not confining itself merely to the persons or the States where it exists, but that it is wrong in its tendency, to say the least, that extends itself to the existence of the whole nation. Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with



it as a wrong. We deal with it as with any other wrong, in so far as we can prevent its growing any larger, and so deal with it that in the run of time there may be some promise of an end to it. We have a due regard to the actual presence of it amongst us and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. . . . Where we suppose we have the constitutional right, we restrain ourselves in reference to the actual existence of the institution and the difficulties thrown about it. We also oppose it as an evil so far as it seeks to spread itself. We insist on the policy that shall restrict it to its present limits. We don't suppose that in doing this we violate anything due to the actual presence of the institution, or anything due to the constitutional guarantees thrown around it.

We oppose the Dred Scott decision in a certain way, upon which I ought perhaps to address you a few words. We do not propose that when Dred Scott has been decided to be a slave by the Court, we, as a mob, will decide him to be free. We do not propose that, when any other one, or one thousand, shall be decided by that Court to be slaves, we will in any violent way disturb the rights of property thus settled; but we nevertheless do oppose that decision as a political rule, which shall be binding on the voter to vote for nobody who thinks it wrong — which shall be binding on the members of Congress or the President to favor no measure that does not actually concur with the principles of that decision. We do not propose to be bound by it as a political rule in that way, because we think it lays the foundation not merely of enlarging and spreading out what we consider an evil, but it lays the foundation for spreading that evil into the States themselves. We propose so resisting it as to have it reversed if we can, and a new judicial rule established upon this subject. . . .

I will say now that there is a sentiment in the country contrary to me — a sentiment which holds that slavery is not wrong, and therefore it goes for the policy that does not propose dealing with it as a wrong. . . . The leading man — I think I may do my friend Judge Douglas the honor of calling him such — advocating the present Democratic



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policy, never himself says it is wrong. He has the high distinction, so far as I know, of never having said slavery is either right or wrong. Almost everybody else says one or the other, but the Judge never does. . . . When Judge Douglas says that whoever or whatever community wants slaves, they have a right to have them, he is perfectly logical if there is nothing wrong in the institution; but if you admit that it is wrong, he can not logically say that anybody has a right to do wrong.

Only two days later, October 15th, they met at Alton. Douglas began with his customary treatment of Lincoln's "house-divided speech," without going back "prior to 1854." He made much, as usual, of his great principle of "popular sovereignty" and of his opposition to the Lecompton Constitution, which the people of Kansas had voted down some time after this canvass opened. "I will never violate or abandon that doctrine," said Douglas heroically, "if I have to stand alone. I have resisted the blandishments and threats of power on the one side, and seduction on the other, and have stood immovably for that principle, fighting for it when assaulted by Northern mobs or threatened by Southern hostility."

He took special pains to win the support of "old-line Whigs," and sought to turn to the best account the opposition of Lincoln to Henry Clay's nomination in 1848. General Singleton, a supporter of Clay in the Philadelphia Convention of that year, was now actively opposing Lincoln. Said Douglas:

Have you read General Singleton's speech at Jacksonville? You know that General Singleton was for twenty-five years the confidential friend of Henry Clay in Illinois,

and he testified that in 1847, when the Constitutional Convention of this State was in session, the Whig members were invited to a Whig caucus at the house of Mr. Lincoln's brother-in-law, where Mr. Lincoln proposed to throw Henry Clay overboard and take up General Taylor in his place, giving as his reason that if the Whigs did not take up General Taylor, the Democrats would. Singleton testifies that Lincoln, in that speech, urged as another reason for throwing Henry Clay overboard that the Whigs had fought long enough for principle and ought to begin to fight for success. . . . Now, Mr. Lincoln tells you that he is an old-time Clay Whig!

While there was still no lack of belligerent audacity on the part of Douglas, one can almost certainly detect symptoms of an undercurrent of despondent dread in his mind at this moment. He had already heard Southern responses to avowals drawn from him by the second question of Lincoln's Freeport catechism and by the supplementary fifth question at Jonesboro. Though, with the advantages secured by an unequal apportionment and by the number of Democratic Senators holding over, he might feel reasonably secure of retaining his present place, he could not but have seriously laid to heart the monition his opponent had given him at Galesburg.

Notably enough, in his impressive speech at Alton Lincoln used these words: "Whenever the issue can be distinctly made, and all extraneous matter thrown out, so that men can fairly see the real difference between the parties, this controversy will soon be settled, and it will be done peaceably, too. There will be no war, no violence. It will be placed again where the wisest and best men of the world placed it."

The debate closed at the place where, a few months after Lincoln's anti-slavery protest was entered on the Assembly journal at Vandalia, Elijah P. Lovejoy came to a violent death for his hatred of slavery. When the two competitors stepped down from the stand and went their ways, two weeks remained before the decisive vote. Douglas received a small but sufficient majority of the Legislature and a re-election. Lincoln had in the entire popular vote a majority of about four thousand.

## CHAPTER XV.

1859 - 1860.

*On the Verge of a New Epoch — Letters and Addresses —  
Incidents and Portents — John Brown at Har-  
per's Ferry — Chaos in Congress.*

We know little of what was passing through Lincoln's mind during the autumn and winter following the great Senatorial contest. Now as ever his reserve had depths which none of his friends could sound, but of matters at the surface he spoke with frankness and freedom. To Mr. Judd he wrote on the 15th of November: "Doubtless you have suspected for some time that I had entertained a personal wish for a term in the United States Senate, and had the suspicion taken the shape of a direct charge, I think I could not have truthfully denied it. But let the past as nothing be! For the future, my view is that the fight must go on. . . . We have now one hundred and twenty-four thousand clean Republican votes. That 'pile' is worth keeping together. It will elect a State ticket two years hence. In that day I shall fight in the ranks, and shall be in no one's way for any of the places."

Lincoln was again busy in the courts. He had law cases in the year 1859 in Missouri, Wisconsin and Indiana, besides the many in his own State. There may have been to his mind a touch of humor — a certain pathos also — in the fact that, besides professional calls,



he had a number of invitations to lecture. He actually prepared a discourse on "Discoveries and Inventions," with which he filled three appointments in February and March. Aiming at a more lively and "rattling" style than he was accustomed to in his political speeches, he was less natural and less successful on the platform than on the stump.

The city election in Chicago, on the 1st of March, was carried by the Republicans. Lincoln was there, and spoke briefly after the result was known, the same night. "I am exceedingly happy," he said, "to meet you under such cheering auspices on this occasion — the first on which I have appeared before an audience since the campaign last year." He returned thanks for the gallant support that the Republicans of Chicago and of the State had given to the common cause in the late "momentous struggle in Illinois." Continuing, he said:

I remember in that canvass but one instance of dissatisfaction with my course, and I allude to that now not for the purpose of producing any unpleasant feeling, but in order to help get rid of the point upon which that matter of disagreement or dissatisfaction arose. I understand that in some speeches I made I said something, or was supposed to have said something, that some very good people, as I really believe them to be, commented upon unfavorably, and said that rather than support one holding such sentiments as I had expressed, the real friends of liberty could afford to wait a while. I don't want to say anything that shall excite unkind feeling, and I mention this simply to say that I am afraid of the effect of that sort of argument. I do not doubt that it comes from good men, but I am afraid of the result upon organized action when great results are in view. if any of us allow ourselves to seek out minor points on which there may be a difference of views as to policy and

right, and let them keep us from uniting in action upon a great principle in a cause on which we all agree.

Immediately after the November election there had been in the press of Illinois, and in private correspondence, suggestions of his nomination for the Presidency. This possibility was seen by many thinking men more clearly than the managers of political conventions were generally aware. The fact is discernible, though not directly suggested, in the invitation he received to attend a commemoration of Jefferson's birthday at Boston. He replied (April 6, 1859):

Your kind note, inviting me to attend a festival in Boston on the 13th inst., in honor of the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, was duly received. My engagements are such that I can not attend.

Bearing in mind that about seventy years ago two great political parties were first formed in this country; that Thomas Jefferson was the head of one of them and Boston the headquarters of the other, it is both curious and interesting that those supposed to descend politically from the party opposed to Jefferson should now be celebrating his birthday in their own original seat of empire, while those claiming political descent from him have nearly ceased to breathe his name everywhere.

Remembering, too, that the Jefferson party was formed upon its supposed superior devotion to the *personal* rights of men, holding the rights of *property* to be secondary only, and greatly inferior, and then assuming that the so-called Democracy of to-day are the Jefferson, and their opponents the anti-Jefferson parties, it will be equally interesting to note how completely the two have changed hands as to the principles upon which they were originally supposed to be divided.

The Democracy of to-day hold the *liberty* of one man to be absolutely nothing when in conflict with another man's right of *property*. Republicans, on the contrary, are for the *man* and the *dollar*, but, in case of conflict, the *man* before the dollar.

I remember being once much amused at seeing two

partially intoxicated men engage in a fight with their great-coats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other. If the two leading parties of this day are really identical with the two in the days of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as the two drunken men.

But, soberly, it is now no child's play to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation.

One would state with great confidence that he could convince any sane child that the simpler propositions of Euclid are true; but, nevertheless, he would fail, utterly, with one who should deny the definitions and axioms. The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashinglly calls them "glittering generalities;" another bluntly calls them "self-evident lies;" and others insidiously argue that they apply only to "superior races."

These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect,—the supplanting the principles of free government, and restoring those of classification, caste and legitimacy. They would delight a convocation of crowned heads plotting against the people. They are the vanguard—the miners and sappers—of returning despotism. We must repulse them or they will subjugate us.

This is a world of compensations, and he who would *be* no slave must consent to *have* no slave. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and, under a just God, can not long retain it.

All honor to Jefferson—to the men who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there that to-day and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression.\*

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\*For an authoritative copy of this letter (published by the Boston press at the time) the writer was indebted to the late Hon. Henry L. Pierce, Chairman of the committee addressed—at one time Mayor of Boston and Member of Congress.



A large number of German-born citizens, who were heartily in accord with the main purposes of the Republican party, found it hard to unite with the "Americans," who had in a day crushed the old Whig party of Massachusetts, and brought to the front such men as Henry Wilson, N. P. Banks, and Anson Burlingame. Later, a coalition of the new party with Free-Soil Democrats had made George S. Boutwell Governor, and Charles Sumner Senator. Early in 1859 the Legislature had taken action in favor of so amending the Massachusetts Constitution as to require of foreigners a residence of two years after being naturalized to entitle them to vote. This procedure was a source of exasperation to German Republicans in Illinois. One of the most prominent of these living at Springfield,—Dr. Theodore Canisius, afterward United States Consul at Vienna,—in order to allay the excitement on this subject, obtained from Lincoln the following letter (dated May 17, 1859):

Your note, asking in behalf of yourself and other German citizens whether I am for or against the constitutional provision in regard to naturalized citizens lately adopted by Massachusetts, and whether I am for or against a fusion of the Republicans and other opposition elements for the canvass of 1860, is received.

Massachusetts is a sovereign and independent State, and it is no privilege of mine to scold her for what she does. Still, if from what she has done an inference is sought to be drawn as to what I would do, I may without impropriety speak out. I say, then, that as I understand the Massachusetts provision I am against its adoption in Illinois, or in any other place where I have a right to oppose it. Understanding the spirit of our institutions to aim at the *elevation* of men, I am opposed to whatever tends to *degrade* them. I have some little notoriety for commiserating the oppressed



condition of the negro, and I should be strangely inconsistent if I could favor any project for curtailing the existing rights of white men, even though born in different lands and speaking different languages from myself.

As to the matter of fusion, I am for it, if it can be had on Republican ground; and I am not for it on any other terms. A fusion on any other terms would be as foolish as unprincipled. It would lose the whole North, while the common enemy would still carry the whole South. The question of *men* is a different one. There are good patriotic men and able statesmen in the South whom I would cheerfully support if they would now place themselves on Republican ground. But I am against letting down the Republican standard a hair's breadth.

I have written this hastily, but I believe it answers your questions substantially.

There was in this response nothing of the shyness of a conscious and cautious candidate, yet we may doubt the strict accuracy of the Doctor's opinion, that it was written at a time when Lincoln "had not the most distant idea of being nominated for the Presidency."

In a private letter to Hon. Schuyler Colfax\* (whom he had then never met), he urged careful efforts "to hedge against divisions in the Republican ranks generally, and particularly for the contest of 1860." In this communication, making no allusion to Presidential candidates, or to the temporary inclination of Mr. Colfax early in the previous year to favor the re-election of Douglas to the Senate, Lincoln wrote:

The point of danger is the temptation in different localities to "platform" for something which will be popular just there, but which, nevertheless, will be a firebrand elsewhere, and especially in a national convention. As instances, the

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\*July 6, 1859. The letter is given entire in "Complete Works," (N. & H.), I., 535.

movement against foreigners in Massachusetts; in New Hampshire, to make obedience to the fugitive slave law punishable as a crime; in Ohio, to repeal the fugitive slave law; and squatter sovereignty in Kansas. In these things there is explosive matter enough to blow up half a dozen national conventions, if it gets into them, and what gets very rife outside of conventions is very likely to find its way into them.

Among the letters he received during the summer, expressing a desire that he should be a candidate for the Presidential nomination, was one from a conservative Republican of Ohio,—Hon. Samuel Galloway, previously a Whig member of Congress,—who was averse to the candidacy of Governor Chase. This letter was written soon after the meeting of the Ohio Republican State Convention, which had refused to renominate Judge Joseph Swan, of the Supreme Court, a man of high standing as a jurist, and personally much esteemed, whose defeat in convention was attributed to a recent decision of the court, of which he prepared the opinion, in one of the noted cases arising under the fugitive slave law of 1850.

An alleged fugitive slave, captured not far from Oberlin, in a community strongly anti-slavery, had been promptly rescued from the arresting officer. A number of prominent citizens were prosecuted for taking part in the rescue and put in jail; whereupon they applied to the Supreme Court of the State for relief under a writ of *habeas corpus*. There was great excitement in Northern Ohio, and at an indignation mass meeting in Cleveland, Governor Chase himself was one of the speakers. Some of the most respected citizens of the State, he said, had done what they believed to be right, and what

not one man in a thousand could look up into the blue sky with his right hand on his heart and say was not right. "If a process for the release of any prisoner should issue from the courts of the State," (so he was reported,) "he was free to say that, so long as Ohio was a sovereign State,\* that process should be executed." Not long after this meeting the court gave its decision, refusing to interfere and remanding the prisoners. The circumstances thus briefly given will explain the first part of Lincoln's reply to his before-named correspondent, dated July 28, 1859: †

Two things done by the Ohio Republican Convention, namely, the repudiation of Judge Swan and the "plank" for the repeal of the fugitive slave law, I very much regretted. These two things are of a piece, and they are viewed by many good men, sincerely opposed to slavery, as a struggle against and in disregard of the Constitution itself; and it is the very thing that will greatly endanger our cause if it be not kept out of our National Convention.

There is another thing our friends are doing which gives me some uneasiness. It is their leaning toward "popular sovereignty." There are three substantial objections to this: First, no party can command respect which sustains this year what it opposed last. Secondly, Douglas (who is the most dangerous enemy of liberty, because the most insidious one) would have but little support in the North, and, by consequence, no capital to trade on in the South, if it were not for our friends thus magnifying him and his humbug. But lastly, and chiefly, Douglas's popular sovereignty, accepted by the public mind as a great principle, nationalizes slavery and revives the African slave trade inevitably. Taking

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\*Note how readily the phrase "sovereign State" drops from the pen of Chase, and of Lincoln also (in the Canisius letter just given)—later more current at the South than at the North.

†First given to the press after Governor Chase became Chief Justice.

slaves into new Territories and buying slaves in Africa are identical things — identical rights or identical wrongs — and the argument which establishes one will establish the other. Try a thousand years for a sound reason why Congress shall not hinder the people of Kansas from having slaves, and when you have found it, it will be an equally good one why Congress should not hinder the people of Georgia from importing slaves from Africa.

As for Governor Chase, I have a kind side for him. He was one of the few distinguished men of the nation who gave us their sympathy last year. I never saw him — suppose him to be able and right-minded, but still he may not be the most suitable as a candidate for the Presidency.

I must say, I do not think myself fit for the Presidency. As you propose a correspondence with me, I shall look for your letters anxiously.

There was a lively canvass this year in Ohio, where Mr. Chase, near the close of his second term as Governor, was the general choice of the Republicans to succeed Senator George E. Pugh, of whom he had been the immediate predecessor. The Governor had been re-elected two years before by a plurality of little more than one thousand. Ohio was clearly debatable ground, and there was an anxious state of mind on both sides. Among the orators called in from abroad were the two Illinois champions, whose contest had become of national interest the previous year. Douglas spoke at Columbus and Cincinnati, and was followed in each place, after a brief interval, by Lincoln. The main subject of the latter's Columbus speech (on the 16th of September) was a magazine article by Douglas, expounding his "popular sovereignty" doctrine — supposed to be "the most maturely considered of his long series of explanations."

On the 17th Lincoln addressed a very large audience



in Cincinnati, on the same general topics, but without self-repetition. There were also incidental passages of his speech of special interest and detachable from its main course. For example, recalling the remark of Douglas on a former occasion about "shooting over the line," while disclaiming any purpose to interfere with slavery in the States, he said:

It has occurred to me here to-night that if ever I do shoot at the people on the other side of the line in a slave State, and purpose to do so, keeping my skin safe, I have now about the best chance I shall ever have. I should not wonder if there are some Kentuckians about this audience; we are close to Kentucky, and whether that be so or not, we are on elevated ground, and by speaking distinctly, I should not wonder if some of the Kentuckians should hear me on the other side of the river. For that reason, I propose to address a portion of what I have to say to the Kentuckians.

I say, then, in the first place, to the Kentuckians, that I am what they call, as I understand it, a "Black Republican." I think that slavery is wrong, morally, socially and politically. I desire that it should be no farther spread in these United States, and I should not object if it should gradually terminate in the whole Union. While I say this for myself, I say to you, Kentuckians, that I understand that you differ radically with me upon this proposition; that you believe slavery is a good thing; that slavery is right; that it ought to be extended and perpetuated in this Union. Now, there being this broad difference between us, I do not pretend in addressing myself to you, Kentuckians, to attempt proselyting you at all; that would be a vain effort. I do not enter upon it. I only propose to try to show you that you ought to nominate for the next Presidency, at Charleston, my distinguished friend, Judge Douglas. In whatever there is a difference between you and him, I understand he is sincerely for you, and more wisely for you than you are for yourselves. . . .

I lay down the proposition that Judge Douglas is not only the man that promises you in advance a hold upon the

North, and support in the North, but that in every possible way he can he constantly moulds the public opinion of the North to your ends; and if there are a few things in which he seems to be against you — a few things which he says that appear to be against you, and a few that he forbears to say which you would like to hear him say — you ought to remember that the saying of the one, or the forbearing to say the other, would lose his hold upon the North, and, by consequence, would lose his capacity to serve you.

Of the results of an anticipated success of the Republican party in the next national canvass he said:

I will tell you, so far as I am authorized to speak for the Opposition, what we mean to do with you. We mean to treat you as nearly as we possibly can as Washington, Jefferson and Madison treated you. We mean to leave you alone, and in no way to interfere with your institutions; to abide by all and every compromise of the Constitution, and, in a word, coming back to the original proposition, to treat you, so far as degenerated men (if we have degenerated) may, according to the example of those noble fathers—Washington, Jefferson and Madison.

He had the satisfaction of hearing from Ohio, in October, that the Republicans had elected William Dennison Governor, and a majority of the Legislature, which insured the choice of Governor Chase as successor of Mr. Pugh in the United States Senate.

A few days later came the ominous news of John Brown's raid. In subsequent speeches of this year, Lincoln spoke in plain terms of abhorrence of the attempt to incite a slave insurrection. John Brown was promptly tried and convicted at Charlestown; was sentenced on the 1st of November; on the 2d of December was hanged. Lincoln, in his simplicity of character, could not adore as a saint one whom he

Columbus, Oct. 29, 1878

My dear Sir:

Accept my warm thanks  
for your very kind and cordial  
response to my request and for  
your more than cordialness. As one good  
turn deserves another! may I take  
courage to ask you, to copy the Article  
of the Quaker Journal of this week in  
relation to the influence of independent  
presses I mean a clerical. It  
will aid me with conservative men.

You have laid me under a detail  
obligation to you prompt & efficient  
action against the attempt of the  
unscrupulous to make me responsible  
for the Brown movement. A mere paper  
to a letter - not even that but a simple  
<sup>of state and order.</sup>  
renewing <sup>of state and order.</sup> and - evidence from  
that the letter was sent to me & the note

who found money" tortured to prove that  
money was furnished to Brown for his insane  
attempt! It is evidence not supposed to stand  
on a surface. How really base it is  
to do.

The truth - that <sup>if</sup> the memorandum is  
genuine happened the intention of Forbes  
when it was written, that it was never  
conceded into act. No copy of the letter was ever  
sent me. Certainly none ever reached me. And  
to many it was not much I can say to  
say that I ever "found" the Kansas cause  
as all I did contribute was to aid in repelling  
kindness, even. I have contributed some  
directly or indirectly since 1856 to poor old  
Brown. I have contributed any as far as I can make  
and was the medium by which later in 1856 a  
small sum was given to him to aid in filling the  
thunder canon.

For the man! How truly mild by his own inspiration?  
How weak - how much - how criminal then to stir up his weakness



which of success would delay the land with  
blood & ache and the faintest hopes of mankind! And  
yet how hard to condemn him, when one remembers  
the provocation - the unselfish desire to be free  
the effort - the bravery - the humanity towards  
his prisoners which defied his pursuers - ?  
It is a tragedy which will supply themes for  
novelists & poets for centuries - Now we condemn  
his act & pity his fate forever. But while pity  
& condemnation mingle for him how stern will be  
the upbraidings which must fall on the government  
of Fugitive Slavery after Kansas which began it all  
and when slavery itself which endures it all.

By the way I am strongly impressed with  
the opinion that the man who has been - now  
called the Commissioner, "Guth" I beg you - that its  
slavery is identical, the other day was a specimen.  
I am assured he lived at his friend's seminary  
you - how could he then have escaped in Decmber '54

Yours truly

A. M. M.



pitied as a criminal. Such a canonization was possibly beyond his comprehension. On the other hand, Governor Chase solved the enigma, in so far as soluble, when he privately wrote\* (October 29, 1859):

Poor old man! How sadly misled by his own imagination! How rash, how mad, how criminal, thus to stir up insurrection, which, if successful, would deluge the land with blood and make void the fairest hopes of mankind! And yet how hard to condemn him, when we remember the provocation, the unselfish desire to set free the oppressed, the bravery, the humanity towards his prisoners, which defeated his purposes! This is a tragedy which will supply themes for novelists and poets for centuries. Men will condemn his act and pity his fate forever. But while pity and condemnation mingle for him, how stern will be the reprobation which must fall upon the guiltiness of forcing slavery upon Kansas, which began it all, and upon slavery itself, which underlies it all!

Lincoln found time to prepare an address, which he delivered at the Wisconsin State Agricultural Fair, in Milwaukee, on the last day of September. He recommended to farmers the policy of "thorough cultivation"; discussed the relations of capital and labor; offered practical suggestions in regard to the steam plow, then occupying attention; and introduced other topics of special interest to his auditors, interspersing shrewd hints or maxims in his own way. His closing words, addressed to those who were contesting for premiums, are particularly noteworthy for their flavor of reminiscence and personal experience: "Some of you will be successful, and such will need but little philosophy to take them home in cheerful spirits; others will be disappointed, and will be in a less happy mood. To

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\*In a letter (hitherto unpublished) to the present writer. See fac-simile.

such let it be said, 'Lay it not too much to heart.' Let them adopt the maxim, 'Better luck next time,' and then by renewed exertion make that better luck for themselves. And by the successful and unsuccessful let it be remembered that, while occasions like the present bring their sober and durable benefits, the exultations and mortifications of them are but temporary; that the victor will soon be vanquished if he relax in his exertions, and that the vanquished this year may be victor next, in spite of all competition."

In his law office at home, a year from the day on which the case between Douglas and himself was decided at the polls, Lincoln wrote the following letter (never before printed), which has specially interested lawyers who have read it:

SPRINGFIELD, November 2, 1859.

*Wm. Dungy, Esq.:*

DEAR SIR:—Yours of October 27 is received. When a mortgage is given to secure two notes, and one of the notes is sold and assigned, if the mortgaged premises are only sufficient to pay one note, the one assigned will take it all. Also, an execution, from a judgment on the assigned note, may take it all; it being the same thing in substance. There is redemption on execution sales from the United States Court just as from any other Court.

You did not mention the name of the plaintiff or defendant in the suit, and so I can tell nothing about it as to sales, bids, etc. Write again.

Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.

In December he received a letter from the Republican Executive Committee of Ohio, inclosing another signed by Mr. Dennison and many other prominent Republicans, returning thanks for his aid in the late canvass, and asking for publication authentic copies of



the speeches on both sides in his debate with Senator Douglas, as well as of the two speeches lately delivered by himself in Ohio. He complied with this request, and the volume containing these speeches, speedily published at Columbus, had a wide circulation and influence.

The popular branch of the new Congress bore evidence of the shocks that had rent asunder the old parties in collisions of North and South — of Union and Disunion. On the 5th of December began a memorable struggle for the choice of a Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Republicans at the start divided their votes, giving John Sherman, of Ohio, sixty-six, and Galusha A. Grow, of Pennsylvania, forty-three — thereafter concentrating for weeks upon Mr. Sherman. There were eighty-six votes for Mr. Bocock, of Virginia, and thirty-five were variously distributed between American, Anti-Lecompton and other members. With no business in order save the choice of a Speaker, under the chairmanship of the Clerk, a debate and wrangle sprang up over a certain "Helper book," the production of an anti-slavery North Carolinian, and extended into the kindred inflammatory topics of the time. For nearly two months the angry strife went on, personal violence, if not general bloodshed, being repeatedly endangered — civil war seeming on the point of beginning on the floor of the House. During these days the galleries were thronged; spectators shared the feelings of the combatants below; the country looked on with anxious emotion or belligerent sympathy; and no one could predict the end. During this battle of words a

little dialogue occurred one day between John Hickman (Anti-Lecompton Democrat), of Pennsylvania, and Lucius J. Gartrell, a Georgia Secessionist, so typical of the spirit of the hour as to deserve historic record, and so significant as never to be forgotten by those who personally witnessed the effect of Hickman's prophetic retort. If dissolution of the Union meant only the establishment of a "dividing line of sentiment," Mr. Hickman said it had already come. He continued:

But if dissolution means that there is to be a division of territory, I say no; that will never be. I express my opinion—and that opinion may go before the country, whether false or true—when I say no; the North will never tolerate a division of the territory. (Applause from the Republican benches.)

*Mr. Gartrell:* I should like to know how you are to prevent it.

*Mr. Hickman:* I will tell you how it will be prevented. I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet; but I express my belief that there is as much true courage in the North, though it may not be known by the name of chivalry [sensation], as there is in the South. I do not use the word contemptuously, for I admire chivalry everywhere. There is as much true courage at the North as there is at the South. I always believed it; therefore I will express it; and I believe, sir, that with all the appliances of art to assist, eighteen millions of men reared in industry, with habits of the right kind, will always be able to cope successfully, if it need be, with eight millions of men without these auxiliaries. [Great sensation, some applause from the Republican benches and the galleries, and hisses in parts of the hall.] \*

The bracketed words of the report give no adequate representation of the scene as permanently pictured on the mind of at least one listener, to whom Mr. Hick-

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\**Globe* report for December 12, 1859.

man's manner, if not his words, said: "The result will not be doubtful."

The turmoil over the Speakership ended in the election (by Republican and American votes) of ex-Governor William Pennington, of New Jersey, on the first day of February (1860). John W. Forney, an Anti-Lecompton Democrat, Clerk of the previous House, was re-elected as the Opposition candidate.

It was in December, while this strife was at its height in Washington, that Lincoln proceeded to fill an engagement, made some weeks before, to address the people of Kansas, in Leavenworth, Atchison, Doniphan, and other towns. He received a very cordial welcome as one of their foremost champions. His remarks, in the main, were like in tenor to his speeches elsewhere this year. At Leavenworth, "shooting over the line" into Missouri, he was reported as using some words hardly compatible with his habitual tone of moderation, though not inconsistent in principle with his fixed views — of which this is a notable example:

But you Democrats are for the Union; and you greatly fear the success of the Republicans would destroy the Union. Why? Do the Republicans declare against the Union? Nothing like it. Your own statement of it is that if the Black Republicans elect a President, you "won't stand it." You will break up the Union. If we shall constitutionally elect a President, it will be our duty to see that you submit. Old John Brown has been executed for treason against a State. We can not object, even though he agreed with us in thinking slavery wrong. That can not excuse violence, bloodshed and treason. It could avail him nothing that he might think himself right. So, if we constitutionally elect a President, and therefore you undertake to destroy the Union, it will be our duty to deal with you as old John Brown has been dealt with. We shall try to do our duty. We hope

and believe that in no section will a majority so act as to render such extreme measures necessary.\*

In the Democratic Senate there were signs as portentous as in the Opposition House, though less manifest in their purport.

Mr. Davis, of Mississippi, (February 2, 1860,) offered a series of political resolutions, after the manner of Calhoun, the vital points of which were (first) the denial of any power in Congress or a Territorial Legislature "to annul or impair the constitutional right of any citizen of the United States to take his slave property into the common Territories;" and (second) the affirmation that "it is the duty of the Federal Government there to afford for that, as for other species of property, the needful protection; and if experience should at any time prove that the judiciary does not possess power to insure adequate protection, it will then become the duty of Congress to supply such deficiency." The resolutions did not omit, of course, the usual denunciation of the doctrines of the Republican party. In a body so strongly Democratic as the Senate was at this time, such expression was easily obtainable without prolonged discussion. But the main purpose of Mr. Davis was discipline within the Democratic party. His objective point was Douglas.

In October, Lincoln had been invited to deliver a lecture in Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's church, in Brooklyn, and consented, with the condition that he should speak on a political theme. It was quite satisfactory to him that the lecture committee ultimately

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\*Not in "Complete Works" (N. & H.), but published by the press at the time.



chose the Cooper Institute Hall as the place for his appearance. On the evening of the 27th of February the appointed hour found him in the presence of an audience notable in character and numbers. William Cullen Bryant presided, and many distinguished men sat on the platform.

The subject of Lincoln's address was thus stated: "In his speech last autumn, at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said: 'Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now.' I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it, because it furnishes a precise and agreed starting point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?"

He proceeded to show from the historic record how the thirty-nine signers of the Constitution, framed in 1787, individually, so far as ascertainable from their subsequent acts, regarded the question at issue, namely, "Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?" Twenty-one of the thirty-nine, as he points out in detail, sustained by their recorded acts the position taken by the Republican party in regard to the exclusion of slavery from the Territories, and only two voted against such exclusion by Congress. He then considers the position of the seventy-six members of Congress who framed the twelve amendments soon

after adopted. This was the First Congress, which also framed the ordinance excluding slavery from the Northwestern Territory. No possible escape is left from the conclusion that the Republicans, and not their opponents, were true to the doctrine of the fathers as to the power of Congress on this subject. The remainder of the speech is a calm appeal to "the Southern people," setting forth the aims and purposes of the Republicans should they come into power. This famous speech may be fitly regarded either as the finale of a closing period of his life, or as the prelude to that on which he was unconsciously entering. Its publication in the New York papers and general circulation at the East had an influence on coming events.

From New York he was asked to extend his tour still eastward, taking part in the political canvass in New Hampshire, where a State election was to occur in March, and in Connecticut and Rhode Island, whose elections were in April. With this request he complied, after tarrying a few days in New York and Brooklyn, receiving attentions from friends and forming new acquaintances.

In New England he spoke at Hartford on the 5th of March, and next day at New Haven; later at Meriden, Norwich and Bridgeport, and at one or two places in Rhode Island. He then went into New Hampshire, where he delivered speeches at Concord and Manchester, and visited his son Robert, a student at Phillips Academy in Exeter, preparing for admission to Harvard University, which he entered the ensuing summer. Everywhere agreeable demonstrations and hearty applause greeted Lincoln's public appearance. He was already personally known in New England, and now he

socially met, for the first time, many who were impressed by his intellectual powers, and whose hearts he gained.

He returned home from this tour on the 14th of March, and was soon after busy with an important suit at Chicago, the last in which he was to be actively engaged as counsel. This was a case which may be classed among the celebrated, involving the title to certain valuable real estate — land which the waves of Lake Michigan had gradually extended in one quarter by removal of soil from another, without the intervention of the one party or the consent of the other. The suit, that of Jones against Johnson, was tried before Judge Drummond, of the United States District Court. The plaintiff, who retained Lincoln in addition to other counsel, after once losing the case, now had the satisfaction of obtaining a decision in his favor.

Lincoln was at home with his family three days before the meeting of the Republican National Convention at Chicago, where its delegates were already gathering. It was a quiet Sunday, the like of which, to him, would never return. Said Mrs. Lincoln a week or two later, speaking of this occasion: "We had before us a New York illustrated weekly, in which a number of Presidential candidates were represented in a double-page group, Mr. Seward's portrait being conspicuous over all, as that of the coming man. Mr. Lincoln's picture was there, such as it was, and couldn't well have been made more dismal. Half seriously I said to him: 'A look at that face is enough to put an end to hope.'"

But a bad wood-cut mattered little now, and the suspense would soon be over.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1860.

### *The Chicago Convention — Lincoln Nominated for the Presidency.*

Before 1860 no national convention of any party had been held in Chicago. That place the Republican committee had now selected, not accidentally, though without contest over what was treated as of little concern. Citizens of Chicago erected a temporary building, called the Wigwam, to accommodate the Convention and many thousand spectators. Hospitable and judicious attention was given to the city's guests. The two Republican morning newspaper offices had among their decorations the banner, "For President, Abraham Lincoln"; and the flag of the one Republican evening paper, edited by a personal friend of the New York candidate, bore the legend: "For President, William H. Seward; for Vice-President, Abraham Lincoln." Illinois, less than a week before the Convention met, had chosen delegates united and active in support of Lincoln. New York asked and expected the nomination of Seward. On Wednesday morning (May 16th) Governor Morgan called the Convention to order, and David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, was made temporary chairman. The permanent presiding officer was George Ashmun, of Massachusetts. The platform, reported and adopted the next day, affirmed "the maintenance of the principles



promulgated in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Federal Constitution" to be "essential to the preservation of our Republican institutions." \* It declared that "the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States and the Union of the States must and shall be preserved" — with other less solid generalities. The chief distinctive principles of the party were set forth in these terms:

"That the new dogma, that the Constitution of its own force carries slavery into any or all of the Territories of the United States, is a dangerous political heresy. . . .

"That the normal condition of all the territory of the United States is that of freedom; . . . and we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislature, or of any individuals, to give legal existence to slavery in any Territory of the United States."

There were also expressions in favor of (practically) incidental protection; of river and harbor improvements, and of "immediate and efficient aid from the Government for the construction of a railroad to the Pacific."

Bright skies, a warm sun, gentle breezes from the lake, saluted members of the Convention as they moved toward the Wigwam on Friday morning. There was music by the band which had come from New York; and from the same city there were throngs of men of

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\* The quoted words were in the resolution as it came from the committee. Some writers have given undue prominence to a little episode in which Mr. Giddings and Mr. G. W. Curtis took part. The only change they effected in the platform was the special indorsement of a passage of the Declaration, by insertion in a resolution which already indorsed the whole.

hardy visage and healthy lungs ready to swell the Seward chorus within the walls of the Wigwam. Nor was there lacking a multitude of stalwart men with fog-horn voices who came from places less remote to do their part for Abraham Lincoln. When the names of candidates were formally presented, all were vocally honored — only two, however, beyond the usual courtesy. At the name of Seward, to which the fine oratorical periods of Mr. Evarts led up, there was a Niagara of cheering that seemed irrepressible. The noise was surpassed by the lake-storm evoked when Mr. Judd pronounced the name of Lincoln. Both demonstrations had been well prepared — Illinois having the advantage in opportunity; and had both come together, it might well have been doubted how long the house could stand.

Other candidates proposed were Judge Edward Bates, of Missouri; ex-Governor Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio,—which State, out of its abundance, also had Justice John McLean and Senator B. F. Wade, for both of whom votes were cast,—and Senator Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania. New Jersey at first voted for William L. Dayton, and Vermont for Senator Jacob Collamer.

The first ballot resulted in 173 votes for Mr. Seward, 102 for Mr. Lincoln, 50 for Mr. Cameron, 49 for Mr. Chase, 48 for Mr. Bates, 14 for Mr. Dayton, 12 for Mr. McLean, 10 for Mr. Collamer, 3 for Mr. Wade, and 1 each for John C. Fremont, Charles Sumner, and John M. Reed. The second ballot, which immediately followed, gave Seward 184, Lincoln 181, Chase 42, Bates 35, Dayton 10, McLean 8, Cassius M. Clay 2. When the roll-call was through for the third time it was quickly

discovered that a change of two votes in favor of Lincoln would secure him the nomination, and the change was promptly made. The result was at once known not only in the great hall, but by the waiting multitude outside; and the telegraph told the tale through the land before the formal announcement could be made to the tumultuous Convention.

The news reached Mr. Seward at his home in Auburn, whither he had retired temporarily from his seat in the Senate. To his kind neighbors, who had made preparations for a joyful celebration of his nomination, it was a sudden and chilling reverse. So was it to the New York delegation in their places at the Convention; yet, at the earliest practicable moment, Mr. Evarts, pale with emotion yet unfaltering in voice, spoke harmonious words of consent to the choice of the majority.

In the afternoon Senator Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, was nominated for Vice President, and the great hall was vacated by final adjournment. Before putting the last motion, however, Mr. Ashmun, in the course of some parting remarks, spoke of his service in Congress with Abraham Lincoln, and of his own high estimate of the man; and in his mention of Mr. Hamlin said: "He was a firm Democrat of the old school, while Mr. Lincoln was as firmly, and perhaps too much so, a Whig of the Webster school."

The unexpected is not always inexplicable. There has been no lack of attempted solutions of the mystery of this nomination. Was it, after all, very mysterious?

Mr. Seward's supporters, in spite of the opposition

manifested in many quarters, during the preceding year especially, were confident of winning without a severe contest. After the delegates to the Convention had been chosen there might naturally have been misgivings, as one would suppose at this distance, but the friends of the New York statesman were still sanguine. They miscalculated his strength in a manner that occasioned them several surprises. From neither Vermont nor Ohio did he receive a single vote on any balloting; yet the delegates from the former State were counted as unanimous in his favor; and half of the Ohio delegation, after a compliment for Governor Chase, were relied upon to wheel in the same direction. Connecticut and Rhode Island were refractory, if not as disappointing; only one vote was cast on that side from New Hampshire; barely two from Iowa; not one from Delaware, Indiana, Missouri, or Illinois. At the first, Mr. Seward had no vote from New Jersey or Oregon, and but a minority afterward; while from Pennsylvania he received but two or three votes out of fifty-four. The only States that solidly supported him were New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California. Little more than one-third of the Convention declared for him as a first choice — including the ten votes from the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska and from the District of Columbia, which represented no electoral strength.

The components of the Republican party were not quite free from conflict; at least they were not homogeneous. It had been made up of the old Free-Soil party, of Anti-Slavery Whigs, of conservative Whigs, of Wilmot Proviso Democrats, Anti-Nebraska Democrats, Anti-Lecompton Democrats (results of three dis-



tinct and successive schisms), and of Anti-Slavery Americans. It had also recruits in fact and in expectancy from the conservative Americans and the old-line Whigs. To consolidate these groups, not yet used to working together, and to gain further accessions, Mr. Seward did not seem to a majority of the delegates to be the most promising candidate that could be found. He had been long a public man, writing and speaking much, from the days of his epistolary controversy with the Governor of Virginia onward, and had placed himself among the foremost of those called radicals. Old prejudices thus engendered had been persistently nursed, and were not to be at once overcome. "Americans" complained that he was on too cordial terms with Archbishop Hughes, and alleged that he had made unallowable submissions to foreign and Roman Catholic influences. His course on other questions — Anti-Masonry and Anti-rentism in particular — as well as his ultra position in regard to slavery, had alienated from him a portion of his late party in his own State. The division into Seward Whigs and Fillmore Whigs, with the consequent prolonged altercations, had left antagonisms somewhat allayed, but not extinguished. There were objections, also, to certain New York political methods, and to what was deemed an unseemly lobbyism at Albany, assumed by some (however unjustly) to be in danger of finding shelter or toleration at Washington, should Mr. Seward become President.

Certain States that must be carried in order to succeed in November were declared by men entitled to be heard as almost sure to be lost with Mr. Seward as the candidate. This was especially true of Pennsylvania and

Indiana, whose State officers were to be chosen in October, and each of which had gone Democratic in that month in 1856, with fatal effect. Pennsylvania intended to give Mr. Cameron merely a complimentary vote, a large majority of the delegates looking elsewhere than to Mr. Seward for their real choice. New Jersey, another of the doubtful States, named Mr. Dayton under like circumstances; while Indiana, at one time counted upon for Judge Bates, had early decided to support Lincoln from the first. This happened quite naturally. In Indiana Lincoln was not only well known to members of the bar and largely to the people, but he had served in Congress with Caleb B. Smith, a leading delegate from that State, and was personally on quite friendly terms with him. Mr. Smith had been originally in favor of Lincoln's nomination, though not openly committed before going to Chicago. Indiana was only less zealous in that behalf than Illinois. This fact had its influence with Pennsylvania. In the eastern part of that State, especially in Philadelphia, there was a preference for Judge McLean. There the American and Conservative influences, which it was a special object to unite on Andrew G. Curtin, already nominated for Governor, were strongly opposed to Mr. Seward. The pressure from this quarter — Mr. Curtin himself being present at Chicago and very active — was a potent one in constraining other States. Western Pennsylvania was more inclined to Mr. Seward or Mr. Wade, in sympathy with Northern Ohio. The eastern delegates nearly carried their point of naming Judge Bates, at a private consultation, as Pennsylvania's

second choice; but the western members of the delegation concentrated on Lincoln, who had a small majority over Judge Bates. It came to be understood in good time that there were delegates from Massachusetts, Maine and Vermont, who, not unfriendly to Seward, would humor the Pennsylvanians by going over to Lincoln, but not to McLean or Bates.

When, on the second roll-call of States in convention, the chairman of the Pennsylvania delegation responded for his State, "Pennsylvania casts fifty-four votes for Abraham Lincoln of Illinois," the effect was electric. A new outburst of noisy demonstration followed. Other States fell in line, more or less unitedly, until at the close Lincoln had only three or four votes less than Seward. The way of concentrating opposition to the latter had been found.

One other circumstance is not to be forgotten. As against Douglas, the canvass of 1858 had shown that Lincoln could carry Illinois, strongly Democratic of old and now a close State at best; but whether another candidate could do so in the present canvass was doubtful. The doubt was not diminished by what had happened three weeks before at the Charleston Democratic National Convention. No one carefully considering the matter can fail to discern that during the past six years, in his speeches, in his debates with Douglas, and by his personal efforts, Lincoln had done more effective work towards bringing what remained of the old Whig party and all the other elements of opposition into the Republican organization, and in concentrating its purposes on what was fundamental in its origin, than any

or all of his competitors at the Chicago Convention. He was naturally and rightfully its choice. His nomination consolidated and saved the Republican party.

To Lincoln himself, quietly waiting at Springfield, the event was not altogether a surprise. The first vote confirmed his previous impression that the choice lay between Mr. Seward and himself. The second ballot he construed as pretty surely indicating what the third speedily settled. Pending the latter, he had stepped into the *Journal* office, where many were now anxiously expecting the next words from the Convention. A friend brought him, in a few moments, a written message, and called for three cheers for the next President. With manifest emotion he stood silent for a brief time, then withdrew through the midst of cheering crowds to take the news, he said, to "a little woman down at the house." It was the loyal impulse of a loving heart.

The town grew more and more exultant as the news rapidly spread. A hundred guns were fired with zealous promptitude. A ratification mass meeting, with bonfires and illuminations, was extemporized in the evening, and the multitude on its adjournment moved to the house of the nominee, who there spoke a few words in response to congratulations and cheers, and invited in all who could find room. Coming and going until after midnight, all found an opportunity to press the hand which was ever after to be so busy and often sorely weary.

On Saturday a committee of one from each State, on behalf of the Convention, and accompanied by its presiding officer, met Lincoln in the same house, where all had been so quiet when this week began, to give



him formal notice of his nomination. He replied to Mr. Ashmun's brief address in tones of voice more than yesterday of the minor, melancholy kind peculiar to his darker moods.

Deeply and even painfully sensible of the great responsibility which I could almost wish had fallen upon some one of the far more eminent and experienced statesmen whose distinguished names were before the Convention, I shall, by your leave, consider more fully the resolutions of the Convention, denominated the platform, and, without unnecessary delay, respond to you, Mr. Chairman, in writing, not doubting that the platform will be found satisfactory, and the nomination gratefully accepted. And now I will not longer defer the pleasure of taking you, and each of you, by the hand.

His letter of acceptance had a brevity which has gone out of fashion with nominees in these latter days:

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., May 23, 1860.

*Hon. Geo. Ashmun, President of the Republican National Convention:*

SIR—I accept the nomination tendered me by the Convention over which you presided, and of which I am formally apprised in the letter of yourself and others, acting as a committee of the Convention for that purpose.

The declaration of principles and sentiments which accompanies your letter meets my approval, and it shall be my care not to violate or disregard it in any part.

Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the Convention; to the rights of all the States and Territories and the people of the nation; to the inviolability of the Constitution, and to the perpetual union, harmony and prosperity of all, I am most happy to co-operate for the practical success of the principles declared by the Convention.

Your obliged friend and fellow-citizen,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1860.

### *The Presidential Canvass.*

Mr. Douglas had been, next to Mr. Buchanan, the leading candidate for the Democratic nomination at the Cincinnati National Convention in 1856. When his competitor had received a majority of votes, though less than the required two-thirds, Douglas ended the contest by withdrawing his name. There was then little reason to doubt that the retiring rival, strong with his party both North and South, would be its leading candidate for the nomination four years later; and would he not be fairly entitled to the benefit of his own precedent in treating a majority vote as sufficient? Before adjourning, the Cincinnati Convention took the unusual course of naming the place where the next Presidential Convention should be held. Not less singular, that place was Charleston, S. C. In spite of all intermediate dangers—for the Governors of South Carolina and other States in the same year plotted secession in case of Fremont's election—Charleston in April, 1860, was not so "foreign" as it claimed to be in December. Douglas had a majority in the Convention clearly; but before a ballot was taken, nearly all the delegates from the Cotton States had withdrawn, after a fierce wrangle about the platform; and even then the

fatal two-thirds rule, which required the same number to nominate as before, remained unchanged.

The time had already come — a year and a half after the serious warning given him by Lincoln near the close of the Senatorial debate — when Douglas himself was too “sectional” for the South. His party split on the identical issues pressed home to him by Lincoln at Freeport and Jonesboro.

The Charleston Convention dispersed thirteen days before the Republican Convention met at Chicago; and it was a month after that event when the reassembling — with vacancies filled — occurred at Baltimore. The seceding delegates organized at Charleston, and adjourned to meet at Richmond near the same date. The Baltimore Convention was abbreviated by a fresh secession, which included members from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and California. Caleb Cushing, too, who had presided at Charleston, and at Baltimore until now, resigned the chair, and with B. F. Butler and others from Massachusetts went over to the second gathering of bolters. Douglas having received (June 23d) two-thirds of the votes cast, though not of a full convention, was declared the Democratic nominee for President. A Southern running mate was found in the person of Herschel V. Johnson, of Georgia. The combined seceders nominated John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, and Joseph Lane, of Oregon, for President and Vice President, on the Southern platform rejected at Charleston.

Before the final consummation of the Democratic schism, still another National Convention met at Baltimore (May 19th), and nominated John Bell, of Ten-

nessee, for President, and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, for Vice President. The party was christened "Constitutional Union," and resolved "to recognize no political principle other than the Constitution of the country, the union of the States, and the enforcement of the laws." The Convention was not numerically large. Its constituents were mainly "old line Whigs" and "Americans" hostile to the Democracy but unreconciled to the Republican party. Its candidates were destined to receive more votes than was generally anticipated at the time of their nomination.

Thus before the end of June the work had been laid out for an unprecedented quadrilateral contest.

To animate quite as much as to enlighten the voter seemed to be each party's purpose in the ensuing campaign. Vote-winning, if not a fine art, is a complex one. The press is alert and ardent; the stump orator abounds; there are mass meetings and clubs; banquets, barbecues, processions; the sound of fife and drum, of horn and cannon. There must be outward symbols of faith appealing to sense and sentiment: "hickory poles," "log cabins," "rails," and whatever else will best touch the sympathies of the million. It is idle to quarrel with these things. There is enough else that is more repulsive and lamentable in every important canvass, wherever there are liberal suffrage and large constituencies.

One novelty of the campaign of 1860 was an organization called the "Wide-Awakes," in which many thousands of young Republicans took part, with parades and torchlight marchings, enlivening their own zeal, swelling the ranks with new voters, and arousing an



efficient spirit wherever its work was visible, as it speedily came to be all over the land. Was it not, too, a preliminary training, as yet quite unconsciously, for keeping step in sterner phalanx and battalion on a coming day? Never was there a party, in any canvass, more thoroughly in earnest than the Republicans in 1860.

Again and again Lincoln had given time, talent and travel to urging the claims of the Presidential candidates of his own faith. Now he was to have a respite from these labors, but by no means to remain in quiet and solitude. He did not, like Douglas, see fit to take the stump in his own behalf as a candidate for the great office. But from the very beginning he kept close watch upon the course of events, North and South. He had few hours of idleness during all those summer and autumn months; not a day passed without its visitors coming single or in throngs. His modest dwelling, a few squares away from the chief State and county buildings, soon ceased to be the place in which he communicated in person with the public. He had a room for this purpose in the State House; yet Mrs. Lincoln had her calls, too, from far and near, in the little parlor at home, and heartily did her part in a social way. Her guests were affably entertained, and with each of them such an occasion was sure to re-live as a pleasant memory.

Usually, the voter had been practically left to choose between two Presidential candidates. Though it was otherwise now, there were really but two controlling subjects on which opinion was divided: the Union and Slavery. As to the first of these, neither the Douglas nor the Breckinridge platform had anything to say

beyond a general reaffirmation (alike) of the Democratic platform of 1856, which declared "that all efforts of Abolitionists or others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences; and that all such efforts have an inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people and endanger the stability and permanency of the Union, and ought not to be countenanced by any friend of our political institutions." The same platform affirmed: "That the Democratic party will faithfully abide by and uphold the principles laid down in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 1798 and in the report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799; that it adopts those principles as constituting one of the main foundations of its political creed, and is resolved to carry them out in their obvious meaning and import."

While both wings of the Democratic party were pledged in these terms, it is to be noted that Jefferson Davis and the supporters of Mr. Breckinridge in general openly construed the "Resolutions of 1798" as an explicit declaration of extreme State-rights doctrines, including the right of a State to secede from the Union.

The Republicans had expressly affirmed at Chicago "that the Federal Constitution, the rights of the States, and the Union of the States, must and shall be preserved." They also denounced the threats of disunion made in Congress by Democrats "in case of a popular overthrow of their ascendancy, as denying the vital principles of a free government, and as an avowal of contemplated treason." How the supporters of Lincoln,

Douglas and Breckinridge respectively stood on the other of the two questions (slavery) needs no further indication here. The Bell party made the Union its specialty, leaving slavery unmentioned in its platform.

There were to be some State elections at the South in July and August, and at the North in September and October. So far as the Republicans were directly concerned, it mattered little how North Carolina or Kentucky should vote; yet the posture of those States on the Union question, to be judged from those elections, was of general interest. In Vermont and Maine, which held elections in September, there was no doubt of large Republican majorities, yet their relative magnitude in comparison with those of previous years might show the direction of the popular tide. The October elections in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana would be of great significance. There was thus something to look forward to, from month to month, to relieve the monotony of waiting for the final event in November.

Kentucky and North Carolina, conservative Union States as they were, in their elections confirmed very conclusively that the South in general would give no substantial support to Douglas. His friends had not been able to control the Democratic organization in any slave-holding State but Missouri. Bell and Breckinridge were the competitors between whom the Southern vote would be chiefly divided, and the summer elections favored Bell.

Maine and Vermont, early in September, elected Republican Governors by majorities which showed a marked increase of party strength. In Ohio, a month after, there were Republican gains. But the most

convincing signs were the election of Mr. Curtin as Governor of Pennsylvania, by more than 32,000 majority, and of Colonel Henry S. Lane as Governor of Indiana by nearly 10,000; while in both these States the entire opposition was united against the Republican candidates.

As to New York there was anxiety. In previous years disaster had sometimes rather unexpectedly overtaken Whig or Republican candidates in that State who had been nominated against the wishes of Thurlow Weed. That gentleman had been almost heart-broken over Seward's defeat, and left Chicago in a gloomy mood, seemingly inconsolable, but was prevailed upon to visit Springfield before returning East. An interview with Lincoln so favorably impressed the sagacious visitor that he soon entered heartily into his support. Before the canvass ended, Seward himself actively joined in the work, making several speeches and rallying his friends.

But all danger was not over in New York — the State on whose vote so many Presidential elections have turned, and whose aid seemed now indispensable. The commercial metropolis was growing nervous about the result and the future. The Democratic leaders there were putting forth every possible exertion to divert the electoral vote of the State from Lincoln. Finally, a fusion ticket was made up, on the plea of averting imminent peril to the Union, the electoral candidates being distributed, on agreed terms, between the three other Presidential candidates. Would not this combination obtain a clear majority in the State?

Other like fusions were made. The three opposing



parties in New Jersey formed a common electoral ticket; and in Rhode Island there was a combination between the partisans of Douglas and Breckinridge. Even in Pennsylvania the latter experiment was tried, despite the defeat of a fusion State ticket in October.

Mr. Seward, in a speech at his home in Auburn, November 5th — the eve of the Presidential election — told his auditors that “amid the jargon of these discordant members of the Fusion party” they would have but one argument; “and that argument is, that so sure as you are so perverse as to cast your vote singly, lawfully, honestly, as you ought to do, for one candidate for the Presidency, instead of scattering it among three candidates, so that no President may be elected, this Union shall come down over your heads, involving you and us in a common ruin! . . . But I tell them . . . that, when to-morrow’s sun shall have set, and the next morning’s sun shall have risen on the American people, rejoicing in the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency, these men who to-day sympathize with, uphold, support and excuse the disunionists, will have to make a sudden choice, and choose whether, in the language of the Senator from Georgia, they will go for treason, and so make it respectable, or whether they will go with us for Freedom, for the Constitution, and for the eternal Union.”

On the night of the 6th of November, as the telegraph reported at Springfield the vote of State after State, amid the cheers and congratulations of his friends, Lincoln waited at the Republican headquarters, hopeful but not quite secure, until a late hour, unwilling to go home without something fully conclusive from New

York. At last it came from a source that could be implicitly trusted. Fusion was beaten in the great State beyond a doubt: a majority of the electoral votes of the nation was sure for Abraham Lincoln.

Every free State save New Jersey had chosen Republican electors; and even in New Jersey (where the mixed electoral ticket had three candidates for Douglas, two for Breckinridge, and two for Bell), the combination had not been perfect, only the Douglas electors being chosen, leaving the other four to Lincoln. In Illinois he had nearly 12,000 over Douglas on the popular vote, and a clear majority of all, Bell having but 4,913, and Breckinridge, 2,404; in Pennsylvania a clear majority of over 66,000; and in New York more than 50,000 over the united opposition. In the border States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri, the Republican vote numbered altogether but 26,430; and there was no Republican electoral ticket put in nomination in any other slave-holding State. In the free States Lincoln's total vote was 1,831,180; in all, 1,857,610. Breckinridge had in the North, including estimates of his share of the Fusion votes, an aggregate of 279,211; and Douglas had in the whole South, 163,525 — of which more than one-third were cast in Missouri, where his friends had secured the regular Democratic organization. Bell carried Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee distinctly on the Union issue. Lincoln and Bell each carried his own State, and Douglas and Breckinridge were both beaten in theirs. In the whole South, Breckinridge had but 54,898 more votes than Bell, and was, on the whole vote of the slave-holding States, in an actual minority of over 135,000.

The whole number of electoral votes at the time was 303; of which the aggregate carried for Lincoln was 180; for Breckinridge, 72; for Bell, 39, and for Douglas, 12.

The Chicago Convention had not counted too carefully on the importance of Pennsylvania, Indiana and New Jersey. Did the opponents of Seward's nomination count as justly as Lincoln subsequently did on the hazard of offending New York? Without that State he would not have had a majority of the electoral vote, but barely 145, while the number required for a choice was 152. Without the 27 votes of Pennsylvania and the 4 received from New Jersey, he would have had — carrying New York and every other free State — but 149. With the loss of Pennsylvania and Indiana — to say nothing of the effect of their adverse verdict in October upon other States — he would have had but 140.

In any of these contingencies the election of President would have devolved upon the House of Representatives — with what result, as parties were then shaped, is not at all certain, and it is useless to conjecture. The choice of Vice President would have been made by the Democratic Senate, which had so lately declared for Federal protection to slavery in the Territories.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1860-1861.

*South Carolina Revolts—Secession Tumult in the Gulf States—The President-Elect Bides His Time.*

A Republican President could not have greatly harmed the Southern people so long as their representatives kept their seats in Congress. There was in fact no apprehension of such danger. But separation from the North and the establishment of an empire exclusively their own had long been a cherished dream of extremists in the Cotton States; they had through secret organizations and otherwise prepared for its realization; and they chose not to wait for any better opportunity to revolt.

It was fitting that South Carolina should take the lead. Governor Gist called its Legislature to meet in special session on the 5th of November, the day before the Presidential election—a normal proceeding, because that body was to choose electors. In his proclamation, however, after specifying the legitimate object, the Governor named another one nearer his heart. He wished immediate secession. An act was passed by the State Senate on the 9th, and concurred in by the House of Representatives three days after, providing for a State convention to take formal action on that question.

Either there was a great deal of misemployed oratory or these people thought they were initiating civil



war. The presiding officer of the Senate said on first taking the chair: "I do not seek to lift the veil that hides the future from our sight, but we have all an instinctive feeling that we are on the eve of great events. . . . In our unity will be our strength, physical and moral. No human power can withstand or break down a united people, standing upon their own soil and defending their homes and firesides." Mr. Chesnut, who had just withdrawn from the United States Senate, in a serenade speech in the evening of the same day, spoke in a more excited vein: "For himself, he would unfurl the Palmetto flag, fling it to the breeze, and, with the spirit of a brave man, determine to live and die as became our glorious ancestors, and ring the clarion notes of defiance in the ears of an insolent foe!"

Congressman Boyce said, the next evening at Columbia: "In my opinion, the South ought not to submit. If you intend to resist, the way to resist in earnest is to act; the way to enact revolution is to stare it in the face. I think the only policy for us is to arm as soon as we receive authentic intelligence of the election of Lincoln."

Many other speeches, as well as the message of the Governor, were of similar warlike tone. Already military companies had been formed and were actively drilling, to prepare for the contemplated emergency.

In Georgia a "military convention" was held at Milledgeville (then the State Capital) on the 12th of November. Governor Brown, who was one of the speakers, said it was the duty of other Southern States to sustain South Carolina: "He would like to see the Federal troops dare attempt the coercion of a seceding

Southern State! For every Georgian who fell in conflict thus incited, the lives of two Federal soldiers should expiate the outrage on State sovereignty." Of course, the "military" gentlemen there assembled voted for the resolution offered in favor of secession. Disunion orators did not anticipate bloodless revolution. They looked forward to civil war without a shudder. They seemed, indeed, to enjoy the prospect and its promise of a harvest of glory.

On the day after the election, Judge Magrath, of the United States District Court in South Carolina, resigned; as did also the District Attorney, and the Collector of the Port at Charleston. Mr. Hammond, following his colleague, resigned his seat in the United States Senate directly after the passage of the act providing for the Secession State Convention. The South Carolina representatives were hardly more tardy. So far as possible, every relation of the State to the Union was to be terminated at once.

In the other Cotton States the work of secession was aggressively pushed, but South Carolina alone had taken the fatal step before the close of December.

Still a private citizen at Springfield, Lincoln was not a dull spectator of passing events. From his youth he had been a constant and eager reader of newspapers, both Northern and Southern, and kept himself well informed on public matters from day to day. There were certainly few who, at this time, formed as accurate judgments on current affairs and their future bearings as he. Would the secession dragon be strangled at its birth, or allowed in the remaining months of the existing administration to get firmly on its feet and to grow

strong? Whatever he may have replied in his own thought, he surely could not intermeddle at this stage. Even in his private words he was discreetly reserved.

From the moment his election was assured, however, his mind was turned not only to the organization of his administration, but also contingently to its policy. Many visitations were made to him, some by invitation and more without, for consultation on both these subjects. On the night of the November election, wakefully meditating on the task before him, he completed in his own mind, so he stated to Mr. Welles, a cast of the Cabinet substantially as ultimately constituted. One leading purpose in choosing its members was to consolidate the Republican party. He certainly thought of Mr. Seward as first of the list at a still earlier day. In fact, it might be plausibly argued that he was committed to this more than to any other appointment before the canvass really opened. Thurlow Weed, who had visited Lincoln in May, returned home to enter actively into the campaign with apparently as confident an expectation of Seward's appointment as if it had been promised. Mr. Raymond, of the *New York Times*, indeed, writing to that paper from Auburn a day or two after the nomination, positively asserted that Seward would take no office under Lincoln, and this probably accorded with the feeling of the Senator and his interviewer at the time. The whole spirit of Mr. Raymond's letter was that of a discontent suggestive of mutiny. But this humor did not last. There is an interesting gleam of revelation from Mr. Weed himself in a letter to the *London Times* a year or two later, referring to Seward's alleged insult to the Duke

of Newcastle at a dinner to the Prince of Wales in New York, about the middle of October. The idea was preposterous, Mr. Weed argued, especially because Mr. Seward had then "reason to expect to be Secretary of State in the new administration." On the 15th of November Lincoln said to the writer: "It is due to Mr. Seward that he should be tendered the office of Secretary of State. I think he is just the man to be Minister to England." The tender was made to him soon after the meeting of the electoral colleges (in December) — made in perfect good faith, with the wish as well as the expectation that the place would be accepted. It does not follow, however, that under other conditions the most important foreign mission might not have been offered him in preference.

Governor Chase, who had been elected the previous winter to a full term in the United States Senate, to begin on the 4th of March, 1861, aspired to be Secretary of State. In the conversation already mentioned, on the 15th of November, Lincoln said, as occasion was presented: "I think Governor Chase would make an excellent Secretary of the Treasury." This expression was given in such a way as to leave no doubt of a serious purpose to make this appointment. There was an embarrassment, however, not then hinted, in the circumstance that Mr. Cameron, of Pennsylvania, who was intended for a position in the Cabinet, was not content to have anything less than the Treasury Department. Cameron was invited to Springfield before the close of December, and on his return home certain of his confidential friends were assured that he had the promise of either that or the War Department. On



invitation, Mr. Chase visited Springfield on the 3d of January to confer with the President-elect, who asked him whether he would be willing to accept the office of Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Chase requested time to consult his friends before definitely replying. If, strictly speaking, the place was not then offered him, as Mr. Chase afterward stated, Lincoln's consent to this request was a practical committal. No message of declination was ever received, and an acceptance was evidently expected.

As to the War Department, it is certain that Lincoln at one time manifested a disposition to place Cassius M. Clay at its head. This was clearly indicated to the writer in November. General Clay himself regarded the place as practically promised him at an earlier date. If this view is correct, there was a double reason for the fact that the alternative promise to Mr. Cameron was recalled just before the invited interview with Mr. Chase in January. From that time onward until near the 4th of March, Cameron was apparently, if not actually, left in doubt as to whether he would be called to the Cabinet at all. Clay could not become Secretary of War, under the existing complication, without setting aside either Chase or Cameron, if not both, and was ultimately tendered a foreign mission instead.

Early in December, at an interview asked by the President-elect, Judge Bates was offered the place of Attorney-General, which he agreed to accept. Three rival candidates for the Presidential nomination had been chosen as heads of important departments. Was it not natural that Lincoln should wish to have in his council at least one of the active supporters of his own

candidacy? Norman B. Judd, of Chicago, had been an efficient organizer and worker in that behalf, and was a personal friend deemed worthy of such a position. Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, had also rendered valuable service in this way; had been Lincoln's associate at the bar for many years, and had been a distinguished Congressman, holding during Lincoln's term the chairmanship of the Committee on Territories. Influential friends of Mr. Smith visited Springfield to press his appointment as Secretary of the Interior, but received no positive assurance on the subject. Some attempts were made to have a Cabinet place tendered to a Southern Unionist like John Bell, James Guthrie, or John A. Gilmer; but Lincoln foresaw, without refusing permission to Mr. Speed and Mr. Weed to satisfy themselves in their own way as proposed, that no such appointment would be accepted on any possible terms.

On the 22d of November, Mr. Hamlin met the President-elect by appointment at Chicago. This was their first meeting since their names had been associated together as candidates, and probably the first since they served together in Congress, the former being then a Democratic Senator, yet as pronounced as Lincoln in regard to slavery. At this conference there was an interchange of views on national affairs, and Mr. Hamlin stated privately to political friends in Northern Ohio, where he stopped on his way homeward, that there would be "no lowering of the Republican standard" on the part of the incoming President. This was a point on which there had already been solicitude in the minds of some stout Republicans like Senator

Wade, who welcomed this assurance at a moment when so many supports of the party seemed to be giving way.

For, on the one hand, there had begun to be talk of "peaceable separation"—to which Mr. Chase was inclined to listen; on the other, of a surrender of Republican principles and even of the party name, to organize a broad Conservative Union party on a basis acceptable to the Southern opponents of secession. Horace Greeley, in the *New York Tribune*, as early as the 9th of November, took ground for unresisted Disunion; and Thurlow Weed, in the *Albany Evening Journal*, simultaneously pronounced for a substantial surrender in order to conciliate the South. The Republican party was not more strongly bound to redeem its pledge against the extension of slavery than its promise that "the Union must and shall be preserved." Would the President-elect be faithful to his own and his party's promises in both these particulars? This was the question answered by Mr. Hamlin.

That his answer was correct was proved three weeks later—after Congress had assembled and various "pacification" measures had been introduced—by a confidential letter (December 13th) to Representative E. B. Washburne, of Illinois, in which Lincoln said: "Prevent, as far as possible, any of our friends from demoralizing themselves and our cause by entertaining propositions for compromise of any sort on slavery extension. There is no possible compromise upon it but which puts us under again, and leaves us all our work to do over again. . . . On that point hold firm as with a chain of steel."

Congress met three days before the election of delegates to the South Carolina Convention. President Buchanan in his annual message dwelt sympathetically on the grievances of the South, but argued against secession as a lawful remedy, or as any remedy at all. In place of the conclusion naturally following, there was a confession of inability on the part of the Government to hinder the threatened revolt. The practice of the administration but too well accorded with its theory. The days of Jackson and Livingston were gone by.

Buchanan asked no legislation to strengthen his arm for the emergency. Congress volunteered none, but gave itself to the consideration of measures to pacify the discontented South. Most prominent of the propositions of this character was that offered by Mr. Crittenden, then Senator from Kentucky—to be succeeded by Vice President Breckinridge on the 4th of March, and to have a seat in the House of Representatives. That part of the President's message relating to the perils of the nation was referred in the Senate to a special committee of thirteen, and in the House to a committee of thirty-three—one from each State—and to these committees were respectively sent the various resolutions and projects on the subject introduced in either body. The Senate committee, appointed by Breckinridge, was composed of seven Democrats—Messrs. Powell, of Kentucky; Hunter, of Virginia; Toombs, of Georgia; Douglas, of Illinois; Davis, of Mississippi; Bigler, of Pennsylvania, and Rice, of Minnesota; one Conservative Unionist—Mr. Crittenden, of Kentucky; and five Republicans—Messrs. Seward, of New York; Collamer, of Vermont; Wade, of



Ohio; Doolittle, of Wisconsin, and Grimes, of Iowa. To the House committee of thirty-three, Speaker Pennington gave as conservative a cast as was practicable, Mr. Corwin, of Ohio, being its chairman.

The "Crittenden compromise" included six articles of amendment to the Constitution, making concessions to the South or seeking to allay Southern apprehensions, and four joint resolutions, three of which were designed to strengthen the fugitive slave law, while the fourth favored a more effectual suppression of the African slave-trade. The proposed constitutional amendments provided:

(1) That in all territory south of the line of 36° 30' north latitude slavery should be authorized and protected, and north of that line prohibited; (2) that Congress should have no power to abolish slavery in places under its exclusive jurisdiction within the limits of slave-holding States; (3) or to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, so long as existent in Virginia and Maryland, or either of them; (4) or to prohibit or hinder the transportation of slaves from one State to another; (5) that Congress should have power to provide payment for fugitive slaves escaping after arrest; and (6) that no future amendment should affect the five preceding articles, or Paragraph 3 of Section 2 of Article I. (relating to the basis of representation and taxation), or Paragraph 3 of Section 2 of Article IV. (relating to fugitive slaves); nor should any amendment be made giving Congress any power to abolish or interfere with slavery in any of the States by whose laws it is, or may be, allowed or permitted.

These proposals involved too positive a Republican surrender to find favor on that side in the Senate committee of thirteen. Messrs. Davis, Toombs and Hunter pleaded the lack of such support as a sufficient reason for withholding their votes, which, if cast with

those of Messrs. Crittenden, Powell, Douglas, Bigler and Rice, would have secured a report for the measure. No other proposition had better success, and before the holidays were over this committee had definitely abandoned its hopeless task. The "Crittenden compromise," however, remained before the Senate as an individual measure of its mover; was in its substance considered and rejected by the House committee of thirty-three, and otherwise maintained an apparent though shadowy existence during the remainder of the session.

The South Carolina Convention passed an "ordinance of secession" on the 20th of December. At Charleston, whither the Convention had removed from the State capital, the populace went wild with delight, lighting up the city and parading with noisy demonstrations. There were rejoicings through all the Cotton country, with congratulations to the bold Carolinians; nor were like expressions wanting nearer the border. Other Gulf States had already taken formal steps toward a like consummation. "Minute men" from Georgia were tendering military service to Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, who was putting on the front of active war. With a grim humor highly appreciated at home, the Charleston press had its "Foreign" columns for news from the other States. Special encouragement, too, was given to the secession cause by the open sympathy of a number of Democratic journals and politicians at the North — a kind of help estimated at higher value than a cooler judgment would have justified.

Sensitive capitalists and traders in the large cities began to shake with foreboding; there was clamor for

peace, for compromise; facile politicians, to stimulate reaction, excitedly declaimed to Northern city audiences on the calamities impending over every business interest, to be averted only by conciliating the South. Opponents of Republican opinions were neither tardy nor sparing in their endeavors to turn the state of affairs to partisan account.

Douglas, who had taken the lead in annulling the Missouri line, was now a champion of its restoration through the Crittenden compromise. Senator Pugh, of Ohio, his close political friend, who at Charleston only a few months before had spoken boldly against the demand for the protection of slavery in the Territories, followed his leader in consenting to such protection south of the line of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ , with all the possibilities of future acquisition. On the last day of December, Mr. Pugh — at home for the holidays — addressed a public meeting at Cincinnati in advocacy of this compromise. After expressing the sanguine hopes he had indulged of pacification thereby, he continued:

But I am sorry to say that within the last week before I left Washington all this has changed. I must be permitted to say that the immediate cause of this change was the declaration in the New York *Tribune* purporting to be made on the authority of the President-elect, that he would not yield a single hair's breadth of the position which, as he understood, his party had taken in the last canvass. . . . But it is remarkable that, although Mr. Lincoln has declared it beneath his dignity to give any assurance that would quiet the alarm of the people of the Southern States since his election, he has not thought it beneath his dignity to authorize a declaration to be made which brings to bear on the more moderate men of his party in Congress the whole power and influence of his incoming administration. I think it was an error.

The Senator was not sufficiently candid either in his statement or in his criticism. The demand for a public manifesto from Lincoln, often heard in hostile quarters at this time, was not a reasonable one. While another held the chief executive office, it was not fitting for the elected successor thus to assume any of its duties by anticipation. Nor could there be any "assurance" that had not already been repeatedly and plainly given in the proper way — the same which had been privately uttered to Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, a few days before this speech of Mr. Pugh. On the 14th of November, Mr. Stephens spoke at Milledgeville, where the Legislature was sitting, using even more than his wonted vigor and eloquence in opposition to secession. His speech was much applauded at the North, where his sincerity was not doubted, and where some had faith that his stability would be heroic. Of Lincoln's election to the Presidency, Stephens was reported as saying:

In my judgment, the election of no man constitutionally chosen to that office is sufficient cause for any State to separate from the Union. . . . We went into the election with this people; the result was different from what we wished; but the election has been constitutionally held. Were we to make a point of resistance to the Government, and go out of the Union on that account, the record would be made up hereafter against us. But, it is said, Mr. Lincoln's policy and principles are against the Constitution, and that, if he carries them out, it will be destruction of our rights. Let us not anticipate a threatened evil. . . . I do not anticipate that Mr. Lincoln will do anything to jeopardize our safety or security, whatever may be his spirit to do it; for he is bound by the constitutional checks which are thrown around him, which, at this time, render him powerless to do any mischief.



Seeing a newspaper report of this speech, rebuking the attempt to "break up the best government upon earth," Lincoln wrote his old friend a brief note on the 30th of November, asking an authentic copy of the speech, but making no comment. When Stephens replied he was already overborne, if he had not actually drifted far to sea "with his State." On the 22d of December, Lincoln — prefixing to his response, "For your own eye only" — wrote in turn:

I fully appreciate the present peril the country is in, and the weight of responsibility on me.

Do the people of the South really entertain fears that a Republican administration would directly, or indirectly, interfere with the slaves, or bother them about their slaves? If they do, I wish to assure you as once a friend, and still, I hope, not any[wise] an enemy, that there is no cause for such fears.

The South would be in no worse danger in this respect than it was in the days of Washington. I suppose, however, this does not meet the case. You think slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while we think it is wrong, and ought to be restricted. That, I suppose, is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference between us.\*

Their next communication was in person, four years later, on a steamer in Hampton Roads.

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\* Published by Mr. Stephens after the war.

## CHAPTER XIX.

1860-1861.

*Embarrassments of President Buchanan — Major Robert Anderson "Saves the Country" — Fort Sumter — Plans for Pacification — "Confederate States."*

Before the close of the year there were significant events in Charleston harbor.

President Buchanan in his recent message, following the opinion given by Attorney-General Black, to the effect that he was powerless to put down an insurrection involving the people of an entire State, though he might suppress a smaller outbreak, hardly meant, after all, to proclaim such an utter helplessness in the pending disturbances as was generally inferred. Even the very conservative Attorney-General found it necessary to draw the line somewhere, and considerably inside of so extreme a limit, for he had said in the legal opinion already mentioned: "The right of the Government to preserve itself in its whole constitutional vigor, by repelling a direct and positive aggression upon its property or its officers, can not be denied."

Military works had been erected in Charleston harbor as part of the system of national coast defenses. In one of these, Fort Moultrie, there was a small garrison, numbering less than one hundred men, under the com-

mand of Major Robert Anderson. Another, Fort Sumter, was a costly structure, of much greater strength and importance, erected in the midst of the waters, and only lately brought to such a degree of completion as to make its occupation by a garrison practicable. It was well known that the authorities of South Carolina meant to insist on possession of these and the minor works — “within its jurisdiction,” as they alleged, though in fact exclusive jurisdiction over their site had been ceded by South Carolina to the United States. While eagerly pushing forward the work of arming the State, and mustering into its service volunteer companies from other States, the new Governor, Mr. Pickens, proposed to enter into negotiations with President Buchanan, as the Federal “agent” of the other States, for a pacific surrender of the forts to the Palmetto principality. The Governor’s commissioners, Messrs. Barnwell, Orr, and Adams, reached Washington on this errand a day or two after Christmas.

While they were on their way, Major Anderson, whom they had left quietly holding Fort Moultrie, startled the insurgent authorities and electrified the country by a nocturnal transfer of his little military force to Fort Sumter, then supposed to be impregnable. The demonstrations of public feeling at the North when this news was received left no doubt as to the sentiments of the people about the whole business of secession. After that there was little talk of “peaceable” disunion.

The South Carolina commissioners sent to the President a communication, in which, after serving on him a copy of the ordinance of secession, and without wait-

ing to learn what reception would be given to their credentials, they proceeded to accuse the Administration of violating its pledges in the matter of Major Anderson's dismantling Fort Moultrie and occupying Fort Sumter. They asked an explanation from Mr. Buchanan, who — at first timid, but braced up by Mr. Black — replied to these gentlemen as citizens merely, distinctly repudiating their assumption of an official character, and repelling their allegations of bad faith as to the forts. Neither did he make any disclaimer of Major Anderson's acts. This brought a rejoinder so wanting in courtesy that the President declined to receive it, and the commissioners departed.

There had already been a "crisis" in Mr. Buchanan's administration. On the 10th of December Howell Cobb had resigned his place as Secretary of the Treasury, alleging as a reason "his duty to his State"; and on the 14th Lewis Cass had retired from the State Department, because the garrison in Charleston harbor was not strengthened. Mr. Cobb's place had been filled by the appointment of Philip F. Thomas, of Maryland; and Edwin M. Stanton became Attorney-General, on the promotion of Mr. Black to the office of Secretary of State. The affair with the South Carolina commissioners was not over, when Secretary Floyd, of the War Department, was found to be implicated in the robbery of an Indian trust fund, and Mr. Floyd's resignation, distinctly on that account, was demanded by the President. This was tendered on the 29th of December, in a letter which implied for the public eye that the War Secretary had voluntarily retired because faith had not been kept in regard to the Charleston forts. Joseph



Holt, of Kentucky, Postmaster-General, was thereupon transferred to the Secretaryship of War, and Horatio King, Assistant Postmaster-General, succeeded Mr. Holt. On the 30th of December the President ordered reinforcements to be sent to Major Anderson — a measure agreed upon in Cabinet, with the approval of all except Secretaries Thomas and Thompson, both of whom soon after resigned. General John A. Dix, of New York, succeeded Thomas in the Treasury Department, and Thompson's chief clerk, Moses Kelly, was Acting Secretary of the Interior for the remainder of the term. Buchanan's Cabinet henceforward was more harmonious, but its efficiency chiefly negative.

Secretary Black said very plainly in his official advice to the President:

The forts in Charleston harbor belong to this Government — are its own and can not be given up. It is true they might be surrendered to a superior force, whether that force be in the service of a seceding State or a foreign nation. But Fort Sumter is impregnable and can not be taken if defended as it should be. It is a thing of the last importance that it should be maintained if all the power of this nation can do it; for the command of the harbor and the President's ability to execute the revenue laws may depend on it. . . . The power to defend the public property, to resist an assailing force which unlawfully attempts to drive out troops of the United States from one of the fortifications, and to use military and naval forces for the purpose of aiding the proper officers of the United States in the execution of the laws — this, as far as it goes, is *coercion*, and may very well be called "coercing a State by force of arms to remain in the Union." The President has always asserted his right of coercion to that extent. He merely denies the right of Congress to make offensive war upon a State of the Union as such might be made upon a foreign government.

The following words of Mr. Black, from the same document, especially deserve attention:

The remotest expression of a doubt about Major Anderson's perfect propriety of behavior should be carefully avoided. He is not merely a gallant and meritorious officer who is entitled to a fair hearing before he is condemned. He has saved the country, I solemnly believe, when its day was darkest, and its perils most extreme. He has done everything that mortal man could do to repair the fatal error which the administration has committed in not sending down troops enough to hold *all* the forts. He has kept the strongest one. He still commands the harbor. We may still execute the laws if we try.

He concludes by entreating the President to "order the *Brooklyn* and the *Macedonian* to Charleston without the least delay, and in the meantime to send a trusty messenger to Major Anderson, to let him know that his government will not desert him. The reinforcement of troops should follow immediately. If this be done at once, all may yet be not well, but comparatively safe. If not, I can see nothing but disaster and ruin to the country."

The President ordered the reinforcements, but there was a mortifying failure, for which Mr. Black chiefly blamed General Scott. Others thought the responsibility should be borne in part by Mr. Seward, who, as prospective Secretary of State, was becoming prominent in the councils and schemes of the time. Whatever the influence of either Scott or Seward, the chief burden rested on Buchanan. Weeks before the election the General had warned the President of the dangers from an inadequate manning of the Southern forts, specifying Jackson and St. Philip, below New Orleans,

then without any garrison; McRea and Pickens, in Pensacola harbor, insufficiently garrisoned; Pulaski, near Savannah, without a garrison; Moultrie and Sumter, in Charleston harbor, the former with only eighty men, the latter unoccupied; and Fortress Monroe, at Old Point Comfort, insufficiently garrisoned. His recommendation that prompt measures be taken for the security of these important national works was neglected — “fatally” neglected, as Secretary Black told the President in December.

With little delay after the executive order was given, an unarmed steamer, the *Star of the West*, — not the two war steamers which the Secretary of State had proposed — started from New York with reinforcements for Major Anderson. To the public, Charleston harbor was now the chief point of interest; for what availed peace meetings or compromise projects if the insurgents already in arms were bent on fighting? Did South Carolina actually mean to inaugurate civil war? That question was answered when, on the 9th of January, her guns fired on the *Star of the West* as, with the United States flag at her mast, she entered the harbor at Charleston. Meeting this reception, she wheeled about and returned to New York. So slight an effort had certainly not exhausted the energy of the administration; and Mr. Buchanan promptly sent a special message to Congress so improved in tone as to raise expectations of a more positive treatment of the case thereafter; but during the remaining eight weeks of his term nothing was done to satisfy the hope.

On the day before this humiliating spectacle in Charleston harbor, Senator Jefferson Davis wrote (Jan-

uary 8, 1861) to a close personal and political friend, then abroad, Edwin De Leon, Consul at Alexandria:

We are advancing rapidly to the end of "the Union." The Cotton States may now be regarded as having decided for secession. South Carolina is in a *quasi* war, and the probabilities are that events will hasten her and her associates into general conflict with the forces of the Federal Government. The Black Republicans, exultant over their recent success, are not disposed to concede anything; and the stern necessity of resistance is forcing itself upon the judgment of all the slave-holding States. The Virginia Legislature met yesterday, and took promptly and boldly the Southern ground. Mississippi is now in convention. I may leave here in a few days; though it is also possible the State may choose to continue its Senators here for the purpose of defense against hostile legislation. The confidence heretofore felt in Mr. Buchanan has diminished steadily, and is now nearly extinct. His weakness has done as much harm as wickedness would have achieved. Though I can no longer respect or confer with him, and feel injured by his conduct, yet I pity and would extenuate the offenses not prompted by bad design or malignant intent.

All the Cotton States were indeed rapidly falling into line with the State already "in a *quasi* war," with the recognized probabilities of a "general conflict with the forces of the Federal Government." Some of these States did not wait for even the formality of a Secession ordinance before beginning to appropriate Federal property — forts, arsenals, arms, munitions of war, public buildings, mints, and money. Mr. Davis's own State passed its ordinance of secession on the day after he had written as above — the day which Governor Pickens celebrated by firing on the *Star of the West*. He had previously taken possession of all Federal property at Charleston, and of all the Federal defenses of



its harbor, save only Fort Sumter. Two days later, Alabama and Florida followed suit; and before the close of the month, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. Without resistance, every coast fortification within the limits of the seceding seven States, save the works at Key West, Fort Pickens and Fort Sumter, were wrested from the Government's possession.

The Legislature of Virginia provided for a State convention to act on the question of secession, and resolved (January 19th) that all the other States be invited to send commissioners to meet representatives of like sort from Virginia at Washington on the 4th of February, for "an earnest effort to adjust the present unhappy controversies." The basis indicated for such settlement was the "Crittenden Compromise." Another resolution designated Ex-President John Tyler as a "commissioner to the President of the United States," and Judge John Robertson as a commissioner to South Carolina and "the other States that have seceded or shall secede," with instructions respectfully to request the President and the authorities of such States "to abstain," while the action proposed for the Peace Conference was pending, "from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms between the States and the Government of the United States."

In the Peace Conference thus initiated — which was in session at Washington from the 4th to the 27th of February — there were delegates, including many eminent men, from all the New England States, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and several States further west, as well as from nearly all the Southern States except those engaged, at the same date, in

confederating at Montgomery. This gathering of notables at Washington, however, did not answer the expectations of those — if any there really were — who looked to it for a settlement of “the present unhappy controversies.”

Mr. Buchanan, hardly needing the pacific persuasions of his predecessor, “Commissioner” Tyler, soon settled down to the policy of leaving matters to take their course until dealt with by the incoming administration. This gratified the Virginia pacificators, and at least satisfied Mr. Seward. On the 12th of January, Seward had delivered a speech in the Senate, moderate and yielding in tone — proposing “to meet exaction with conciliation, and violence with peace;” consenting to an amendment of the Constitution forever prohibiting Congress from any interference with slavery in the States; and favoring a national convention to consider further changes in that instrument. He expressly repudiated the “irrepressible conflict” doctrine as it had been attributed to him, and favored the plan lately proposed by Mr. Charles Francis Adams in the House to organize the remaining Territories without mention of slavery. Before the end of January the Territories of Colorado, Nevada and Dakota were thus organized, and Kansas was admitted into the Union as a free State. For a time the secession frenzy seemed to have reached a limit. Although the Legislature of Virginia had called a State convention, a majority of Union delegates was chosen. In North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and even in the Cotton State of Arkansas, the people voted down secession. In Maryland and Delaware, disunion emissaries met a chilling

reception, and neither State was disturbed by a direct popular vote on the question.

A Congress of representatives of the six States first launched into the fatal current — the Texas ordinance not being yet in operation — was organized at Montgomery, Ala., on the 4th of February, and agreed on a provisional constitution for a Southern confederacy. A provisional government was decreed, with Jefferson Davis as President, and Alexander H. Stephens as Vice President. Some facetious State-rightists styled Davis "Chief of the Six Nations." His inauguration took place on the 18th of February.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *On the Way to the White House.*

On Monday morning, February 11th, the last day of his fifty-second year, Abraham Lincoln began his journey to Washington. The air was chilly and the sky dark with clouds as his neighbors gathered at the railway station to bid him and his family farewell. His few parting words were spoken with visible emotion:

*My Friends:* One who has never been placed in a like position can not understand my feelings at this hour, nor the oppressive sadness I feel at this parting. For more than twenty-five years I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here the most cherished ties of earth were assumed. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. To you, my friends, I owe all that I have — all that I am. All the strange checkered past seems to crowd upon my mind. To-day I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon General Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me I can not prevail; but if the same almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me I shall not fail; I shall succeed. Let us pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will all invoke His wisdom and goodness for me.

With these words I must leave you; for how long I know not. Friends, one and all, I must now wish you an affectionate farewell.

This was his exact language as taken down at the moment and telegraphed through the land. No at-



tempted rhetorical improvements have added to the force of its simple eloquence.\*

The President-elect was accompanied by his wife and their three sons; Dr. Wallace, his brother-in-law; Governor Yates, Judge David Davis, Mr. Judd, Mr. Browning; Colonel Edwin V. Sumner and Major David Hunter, of the regular army; Colonel Ward H. Lamon, of the Governor's staff, and several others. His itinerary included the cities of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbus, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York, Trenton, Philadelphia and Harrisburg, occupying twelve days. His first regular speech on the journey was made at Indianapolis, where he said on the evening of the 11th:

*Fellow Citizens of the State of Indiana:* I am here to thank you for this magnificent welcome, and still more for the very generous support given by your State to that political cause, which, I think, is the true and just cause of the whole country, and the whole world. Solomon says, "There is a time to keep silence;" and when men wrangle by the mouth, with no certainty that they mean the same thing while using the same words, it perhaps were as well if they would keep silence.

The words "coercion" and "invasion" are much used in these days, and often with some temper and hot blood. Let us make sure, if we can, that we do not misunderstand

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\* There have been not less than a score of variant versions of this brief speech, with which unreasonable liberties were taken. Undoubtedly some of its phrases would have been different had he spoken less extemporaneously; but he would certainly not have omitted the name of God, used twice in the verbatim report, or the following sentence: "Here the most cherished ties of earth were assumed." Yet these two omissions occur in some other versions—including that "written down immediately after the train started," by Private Secretary Nicolay.

the meaning of those who use them. Let us get the exact definitions of these words, not from dictionaries, but from the men themselves, who certainly deprecate the things they would represent by the use of the words.

What, then, is coercion? What is invasion? Would the marching or an army into South Carolina, without the consent of her people, and with hostile intent toward them, be invasion? I certainly think it would, and it would be coercion also, if the South Carolinians were forced to submit. But if the United States should merely hold and retake its own forts and other property, and collect the duties on foreign importations, or even withhold the mails from places where they were habitually violated, would any or all of these things be invasion or coercion? Do our professed lovers of the Union, who spitefully resolve that they will resist coercion and invasion, understand that such things as these, on the part of the United States, would be coercion or invasion of a State? If so, their idea of means to preserve the object of their great affection would seem to be exceedingly thin and airy. If sick, the little pills of the homeopathist would be much too large for it to swallow. In their view, the Union, as a family relation, would seem to be no regular marriage, but rather a sort of "free-love" arrangement, to be maintained on passional attraction.

By the way, in what consists the special sacredness of a State? I speak not of the position assigned to a State in the Union by the Constitution, for that is a bond we all recognize. That position, however, a State can not carry out of the Union with it. I speak of that assumed primary right of a State to rule all which is less than itself, and to ruin all which is larger than itself. If a State and a county, in a given case, should be equal in number of inhabitants, in what, as a matter of principle, is the State better than the county? Would an exchange of name be an exchange of rights? Upon what principle, upon what rightful principle, may a State, being no more than one-fiftieth part of the nation in soil and population, break up the nation, and then coerce a proportionably large subdivision of itself in the most arbitrary way? What mysterious right to play tyrant is conferred on a district of country with its people, by merely calling it a State? Fellow-citizens, I am not assert-

ing anything. I am merely asking questions for you to consider. And now allow me to bid you farewell.

These words, carefully prepared because anxiously awaited by the country — in some quarters captiously — contain nearly all that need now be recalled of his several addresses before reaching the city of New York. Everywhere, by the proper civic authorities and by the people of every party, he was received with all the honors and more than the usual demonstrations accorded to a Presidential guest. Arriving at the railway station in Cincinnati before dark, he said: "I thought in Indianapolis I had never seen so large a crowd in winter weather. I am no longer able to say that." He was in a melancholy mood when he said later in his main speech (on his birthday): "In a few short years I and every other individual man who is now living will pass away. I hope that our national difficulties will also pass away, and I hope that in the streets of Cincinnati — good old Cincinnati — for centuries to come the people will give such a reception to the constitutionally elected President of the whole United States." The next day, at Columbus — in the extreme modesty that came with his melancholy — he said of "the very great responsibility" of which he had been reminded: "I am deeply sensible of that weighty responsibility. I can not but know, what you all know, that without a name, perhaps without a reason why I should have a name, there has fallen upon me a task such as did not fall upon the Father of his Country." Then, speaking of the existing national troubles, he remarked: "It is a consoling circumstance that when we look out there is nothing that really hurts anybody.

We entertain different views upon political questions, but nobody is suffering anything. This is a most consoling circumstance, and from it I judge that all we want is time and patience, and a reliance upon that God who has never forsaken this people."

These last soothing words led some inconsiderate people in the commercial cities to the hasty conclusion that the President-elect had no proper understanding of the great crisis.

At Steubenville and at Pittsburg he improved his opportunity to "speak across the river" to Virginians in the same conciliatory spirit as he had done at Cincinnati to Kentuckians. He was also drawn out on the Tariff question at Pittsburg, speaking with moderation in favor of Protection. The Pennsylvanians were specially interested just then in the Morrill tariff bill, which directly after became a law with the approval of President Buchanan, and substantially placed the subject without the pale of party politics for a number of years. The Presidential train reached Cleveland on the 15th. The weather was of the worst, yet seemed to have no effect on the numbers or the enthusiasm of the multitude who escorted their guest in procession to the hotel. Here he spoke at length, among other things saying:

In a country like this, where every man bears on his face the marks of intelligence, where every man's clothing, if I may so speak, shows signs of comfort, and every dwelling signs of happiness and contentment, where schools and churches abound on every side, the Union can never be in danger. I would, if I could, instill some degree of patriotism and confidence into the political mind in relation to this matter. . . . I think that there is no occasion for any excitement. I think the crisis, as it is called, is altogether



an artificial one. It has no foundation in fact. It can't be argued up, and it can't be argued down. Let it alone, and it will go down of itself.

Arriving in Buffalo on Saturday evening, the 16th, the President-elect was met at the station by a large concourse of people, with ex-President Fillmore at their head, and later there was an address of welcome by the Mayor, to which there was a response, enjoining composure, adherence to "sober convictions of right," and fidelity to constitutional obligations; the clouds would then be dispelled, and there would be a bright and glorious future. He remained over the Sunday at Buffalo, and continued his journey on Monday, arriving at Albany in the evening. Two speeches were made here, one in reply to Governor Morgan and one at the hall of the Assembly. Here, too, he said: "If we have patience, if we maintain our equanimity, though some may allow themselves to run off in a burst of passion, I still have confidence that the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people, can and will bring us through this difficulty."

At Albany he was met by a delegation from the municipal authorities of New York, who escorted him to that city on the 19th. There he was received with demonstrations unequaled during all this prolonged ovation. Places of business were closed, and the streets were thronged with people as perhaps never before. Mayor Fernando Wood, on behalf of the civic authorities, made the welcoming address, in the course of which he spoke of a "dismembered government to reconstruct, and a disconnected and hostile people to

reconcile," and said it would "require a high patriotism and an elevated comprehension of the whole country and its varied interests, opinions and prejudices," to bring it "back again to its former harmonious, consolidated and prosperous condition;" that "the present political divisions have sorely afflicted" the people of New York City—"all her material interests are paralyzed," and "her commercial greatness is endangered." "We fear," he added, "if the Union dies, the present supremacy of New York may perish with it;" and suggested the use of "peaceful and conciliatory means" as the only practicable way to restore "fraternal relations between the States." The address was courteous in tone, and well represented the feelings of the commercial classes, no doubt, in the larger cities in general. Lincoln responded:

*Mr. Mayor:* It is with feelings of deep gratitude that I make my acknowledgments for the reception given me in the great commercial city of New York. I can not but remember that this is done by a people who do not, by a majority, agree with me in political sentiment. It is the more grateful because in this I see that for the great principles of our Government the people are almost unanimous. In regard to the difficulties that confront us at this time, and of which your Honor has thought fit to speak so becomingly, and so justly, as I suppose, I can only say that I agree in the sentiments expressed. In my devotion to the Union, I hope I am behind no man in the nation. In the wisdom with which to conduct the affairs tending to the preservation of the Union, I fear that too great confidence may have been reposed in me; but I am sure I bring a heart devoted to the work. There is nothing that would ever bring me to willingly consent to the destruction of this Union, under which not only the great commercial city of New York, but the whole country, acquired its greatness, except it be the purpose for which the Union itself was formed. I understand

the ship to be made for the carrying and the preservation of the cargo, and so long as the ship can be saved with the cargo, it should never be abandoned, unless the possibility of its preservation shall cease to exist except at the risk of throwing overboard both freight and passengers. So long, then, as it is possible that the prosperity and the liberty of the people shall be preserved in this Union, it shall be my purpose at all times to use all my power to aid in its preservation. Again thanking you for the reception given me, allow me to come to a close.

In the evening he met, socially, a large deputation from the various Republican associations of the city which had taken part in the last canvass; and he even found opportunity to sit for a time at the opera. He did not appear quite at ease this evening, and he was too much preoccupied with serious thoughts, forbidden his tongue, to exert his acknowledged power of entertaining by conversation, or to be heartily in sympathy with the scenes of either banquet-hall or stage. On the next day (Wednesday, the 20th) he left for Philadelphia, stopping over for a few hours at Trenton, where, in the course of an address in the Senate Chamber, he said:

I can not but remember the place that New Jersey holds in our early history. . . . May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have seen — Weems's "Life of Washington." I remember all the accounts there given of the battlefields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river; the contest with the Hessians; the great hardships endured at that time — all fixed themselves on my memory more than any other single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though

I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing which they struggled for, that something even more than national independence, that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world for all time to come — I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made. I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of His almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle.

And afterward in the Assembly Chamber:

I shall endeavor to take the ground I deem most just to the North, the East, the West, the South, and the whole country. I shall take it, I hope, in good temper — certainly with no malice toward any section. I shall do all that may be in my power to promote a peaceful settlement of all our difficulties. The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am; there is no one who would do more to preserve it; but it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly.

This was received with “long-continued applause.”

There were many in the nation who had been closely watching the expressions given from day to day on this journey, and some whose emotional natures craved more “Jacksonian” words than the President-elect had hitherto indulged in. To such persons this noted little speech was like a removal from Moultrie to Sumter. He would then, possibly, “put the foot down” just as firmly, should the time come, as if he had been more violent in declamation.

His reception at Philadelphia, in the evening, was among the most enthusiastic of all. In replying to the Mayor’s address, he said he deemed it a happy cir-



cumstance that the dissatisfied ones did not point to anything in which they were being injured, or were about to be injured; for which reason he had felt all the while justified in concluding that the crisis, the panic, the anxiety of the country at this time are artificial. Alluding to "the consecrated walls wherein the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence were originally framed and adopted," he said: "All my political warfare has been in favor of the teachings that come from these sacred walls. May my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if ever I prove false to these teachings."

Responding to an address in Independence Hall, next morning, he used these words — some of them specially significant:

I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. . . . I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here, and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother-land, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to the world for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This is a sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

Now, my friends, can the country be saved on this basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world in helping to save it. . . . But if this country can not be saved without giving up that principle — I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it.

Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there need be no bloodshed or war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it be forced upon the Government, and then it will be compelled to act in self-defense. . . .

I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.

He left for Harrisburg the same morning. He was there welcomed by Governor Curtin, and was received at the State House by the Legislature. A large body of the militia was in line on the occasion — suggestive of measures that had already been taken by the State authorities for promptly embodying a military force should there be occasion. In replying to the Governor, Lincoln alluded to this feature of the reception as follows:

I hope no one of the Friends who originally settled here, or who lived here since that time, or who lives here now, has been or is a more devoted lover of peace, harmony and concord than my humble self. While I have been proud to see to-day the finest military array, I think, that I have ever seen, allow me to say, in regard to those men, that they give hope of what may be done when war is inevitable. But, at the same time, allow me to express the hope that in the shedding of blood their services may never be needed, especially in the shedding of fraternal blood. It shall be my endeavor to preserve the peace of the country so far as it can possibly be done consistently with the maintenance of the institutions of the country.

In presence of the Legislature, after returning thanks for his reception, he said:

Allusion has been made to the fact — the interesting fact, perhaps I should say — that I for the first time appear at the capital of the great commonwealth of Pennsylvania upon the birthday of the Father of his Country — that beloved anniversary connected with the history of this country. I have already gone through with one exceedingly interesting scene this morning in the ceremonies at Philadelphia. . . . Our friends there had provided a magnificent flag of the country. They had arranged it so that I was given the honor of raising it to the head of its staff. And when it went up I was pleased that it went to its place by the strength of my own feeble arm. . . . In the whole transaction I was in the hands of the people who had arranged it; and if I can have the same generous co-operation of the people of the nation, I think the flag of our country may yet be kept flaunting gloriously.

This was his last public appearance during the journey, which ended differently from the original intention, and in a manner that gave surprise to the country.

The Electoral count (on the 13th of February) was unobstructed by any material dispute or question. For months past, nevertheless, there had been threats and predictions akin to threats, that Lincoln would never be inaugurated as President. It was not generally known — as it was to a few who were in close relations with him — that he had received many malicious letters, both before and after the election, foreshadowing his assassination. It was no secret that special precaution and care were taken for the safety of his person while on his way to Washington. Save one or two dubious incidents exciting momentary suspicion, all was propitious until the evening of the arrival at Philadelphia.

At this point there came warning, on the responsible authority of Mr. Seward and the Lieutenant-General, of a plot for Lincoln's assassination in Baltimore.

General Scott was thought by some to be unduly anxious about the inauguration. In the Peace Conference, on the 18th — the day on which a "Chief of the Six Nations" assumed power at Montgomery — Mr. Guthrie, of Kentucky, must have surprised many of his fellow-members by saying:

I have had full and free communication with people of all portions of the South before, during and since the election of the 6th of November, and I state here, that I have never dreamed that there was the slightest objection anywhere to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln. To-day is the first time I have heard the question raised, and yet I do not believe that any such objection now exists.

There had been no lack of such talk, however, not only among men with whom Mr. Guthrie had no personal association, but also in newspapers which he did not read. That General Scott had sufficient reasons for the precautions taken is shown by his testimony (January 31st and February 7th) before a special committee of the House (known as the Howard Committee) appointed to inquire into "alleged hostile organizations against the Government in the District of Columbia." Nor was he by any means alone in scenting the particular danger of which he now gave warning. The managers of the railway from Philadelphia to Baltimore had arrived at the conclusion — from evidence furnished by their own detectives — that there was a plot for the assassination of Lincoln when he reached Baltimore. Mr. Seward, through detectives acting quite independently of those just mentioned, had information that



seemed to him so convincing as to require prompt action. He dispatched his son, Frederick W. Seward, to Philadelphia, to communicate the information to Lincoln and to urge him to anticipate the expected time of passing through Baltimore. Instead of going at once, as urged, he determined to keep his engagement at Harrisburg on the next day. The ceremonies there being over, he returned the same evening to Philadelphia, where, with friends accompanying him, including railway officials who were in the secret, he took the regular express train for Washington, about midnight, arriving there early in the morning (the 23d).

The sudden conclusion of the journey was known far and near before the train from Harrisburg, on which he had been expected, ran into Baltimore, where the day passed without disturbance. Mrs. Lincoln and the party with her were courteously treated in the city, receiving attentions from some of the municipal officers, though politically hostile, and the transit through the city, soon effected, was made as agreeable as possible. The President-elect, however, had been tendered no hospitalities such as were offered by every other prominent city on his route. He was under no obligation to make his entry or departure a public affair. The "Conservative Union" newspaper, the *Baltimore American*, said next day that the "prevailing feeling excited by Mr. Lincoln's quiet passage through Baltimore was one of relief and of gratification, though expressions of disappointed curiosity were frequently heard;" and that his action "was a simple and practical avoidance of what might have been an occasion

of disorder and mortification to all interested in the preservation of the good name of our city."

James Buchanan had yet eight days to remain in office when Abraham Lincoln, accompanied by Mr. Seward, called at the White House. Mr. Buchanan, wearied and worn, faint if not sick at heart, dubious, as he sometimes pathetically enough expressed himself, about the ultimate verdict of history on his administration, and anxious to lay down his burden, was not merely politely complacent to his successor, but heartily glad to see him safely arrived. From thence Lincoln and Seward went to call upon the veteran head of the army. With stately deference, as to one who would soon be his superior in office, General Scott also welcomed the man from the prairies, and hinted of the military preparations which were to give security to the coming ceremonies and unhindered possession of the executive departments thereafter.

To the country in general, undeniably, this seemed an inauspicious advent. Inimical jeers were not entirely warded off by friendly explanations. Many of the warmest supporters of the new President were chagrined when they learned, on that chill February day, that his "progress" had terminated in an entry so private. This was aggravated by the invention, soon exposed, that he had traveled from Philadelphia to Washington in disguise. There came reassurance in the belief that the night journey had been taken on the advice of well-informed friends who had a right to be heard, and in the certainty that it had avoided a positive peril. In crossing Mason and Dixon's line, Lincoln had now come within territory which the seces-

sion leaders coveted, claimed, labored incessantly to possess as part and parcel of their confederacy. He had not only traversed the largest city of the South, but had come to be inaugurated as President in a community holding slaves and surrounded by a slave-holding country. Abhorring the man who had thus suddenly come among them, few of the dominant class willingly endured the thought that he had come to stay.

In the brief time remaining, the President-elect gave his last revision to the inaugural address which he had written before leaving Springfield. Few changes were made, and none seriously affecting the policy announced, unless it be what is said of the so-called "Corwin amendment." No one except Mr. Seward appears to have been consulted in the matter, and his suggestions related chiefly to forms of expression and to the sentimental appeal with which the address closes. For the last two months many politicians had looked upon the New York Senator as the real power on whom nearly everything at this crisis was to depend. There was little resistance to his appointment as Secretary of State, but opposition to Mr. Chase for Secretary of the Treasury was kept up with some vigor to the last — especially by the friends of Mr. Seward and of Mr. Cameron. In regard to these three prospective members of the Cabinet, the purpose of Lincoln was unchanged by any controversy after he reached Washington, and the same may be said as to most of their associates.

The Peace Conference adjourned on the 27th of February, and thereupon a salute was fired by Magruder's battery on Judiciary Square — presumably in honor of the propositions recommended by a small

majority for the consideration of Congress, from which the Senators and Representatives of the Cotton States had long since retired. In the Senate there was some apparent relenting at last in favor of the Crittenden Compromise, though on coming to a vote it was lost (yeas, 19; nays, 20). The Corwin amendment (reported by the House Committee of thirty-three) — to prevent any future amendment giving Congress power to abolish slavery in the States — was agreed to by the required two-thirds vote in both Houses. Such was the sum and the end of Congressional attempts at conciliation.



## CHAPTER XXI.

1861.

### *Inauguration — Cabinet and Diplomatic Appointments.*

No unpropitious signs were visible on the morning of the 4th of March. A few regular soldiers and some volunteer military companies were seasonably forming to take part in the customary procession. Magruder's battery took its appointed station on Capitol Hill, out of sight of the main crowd beginning to gather. There were, too, armed sentinels on house-tops at several points along Pennsylvania Avenue before the procession began to move. From first to last, neither martial guard nor armed police seemed to be of use beyond their share in a pacific parade. The coming man, seated in open carriage with his predecessor, was greeted by many thousands of voices as he moved along the broad avenue and ascended to the capitol. Entering on the Senate side, he advanced from within to the rude stand from which he was to speak, on the eastern portico.

Near by in the surrounding assembly of notables stood Senator Douglas. On the pedestal of a column, slight Senator Wigfall, stick in hand, wriggled uneasily; while here and there other Southern representatives were less conspicuously looking on — Secessionists who still lingered unmolested and at present unmolesting.

General Scott was away, anxiously superintending his military arrangements. Whether his right-hand man, Adjutant-General Samuel Cooper, and his foremost and favored subordinate of the line, Colonel Robert E. Lee, were nearer listeners and observers of the proceedings on the portico, or accompanied their chief, can not be distinctly recorded. Captain John B. Magruder was altogether missing, not having yet returned from an absence abroad on leave, so that his important artillery company had not at this moment the benefit of his personal control. Commander Buchanan, in whose charge was the Washington navy-yard, with all its great interests, was probably within eye-shot of restless Wigfall. Justice Campbell, of Alabama, was present with the other Judges of the Supreme Court. Chief-Justice Taney, now far advanced beyond the usual limit of human life and looking debilitated and withered, had expressed in a positive manner his determination to administer to Abraham Lincoln the oath which he had administered to every President since Andrew Jackson.

The grounds in front were covered with myriads of people, compact and quietly disposed; and many shade-trees, now leafless, were darkened with clinging spectators. When Lincoln rose to speak he was introduced by his friend, Senator Edward D. Baker, and had such greeting as only a great sympathetic throng of men can give. The table on which he laid his manuscript before him was small and had no available place for his hat, which Senator Douglas politely took and held in hand. The atmosphere was clear, cool, but not unpleasantly chilly; there was sometimes sunshine and sometimes shadow, as with earnest but deliberate and

well modulated voice, the President-elect proceeded. There was a fresh wind abroad, and presently he placed his gold-headed cane across the fluttering pages, keeping them in place as one after another was turned over. But he spoke without hesitation, from memory.

The inaugural had but one general theme. Some points of it are detachable as indicating the purposes and policy which the new President had in mind at the beginning; while as a whole it is one of his most impressive papers. "Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States," he said, "that, by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so; and I have no inclination to do so.' " He cited also a resolution of the convention which nominated him, as "clear and emphatic" on this matter, and continued:

I now reiterate these sentiments; and in doing so I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace and security of no section are to be in anywise endangered by the now incoming administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given, to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause, as cheerfully to one section as to another.

A comprehensive pledge, when closely considered.

At greater length he spoke of the rendition of fugitive slaves, in terms that would seem to be sufficient to satisfy reasonable men of the South, yet not more explicit than he had repeatedly used on the stump in Illinois. He further said in this connection: "I take the official oath to-day with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules." He then took up the matter of Disunion, arguing in his most forcible manner against the right of a State to secede — concluding on this point:

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken, and, to the extent of my ability, I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union shall be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it, so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative matter direct the contrary.

I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself. In doing this there need be no bloodshed or violence, and there shall be none unless it is forced upon the national authority.

The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. . . . The course here indicated will be followed, unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper; and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing, and with a view and a hope of a



peaceful solution of the national troubles, and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

Argument, persuasion, entreaty followed:

Physically speaking, we can not separate; we can not remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other, but the different parts of our country can not do this. They can not but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you can not fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical question as to terms of intercourse are again upon you. . . .

If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there is still no single reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulties.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the Government; while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect and defend" it.

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union

when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

After bowing response to the applause of his auditors, he turned to Chief Justice Taney, at his side, and repeated from his lips the required official oath. Then followed a salute from the cannons of the battery near at hand, while the procession re-formed and began its return march to the White House. At its door, James Buchanan took courteous leave, with benedictions on his successor, and Abraham Lincoln entered as its master.

At all times, a change of administration implies a general change of civil officers having direct relations with the President or with the heads of departments. Now there were extraordinary reasons for a thorough reorganization. The matter of appointments received immediate and laborious attention from the new President; some there were who thought his time too much occupied in this way at such a juncture; but the event showed that the work was not overdone. The Cabinet officers, already settled in his own mind before the inauguration, were nominated to the Senate the next day and promptly confirmed — namely: Secretary of State, William H. Seward, of New York; of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio; of War, Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania; of the Navy, Gideon Welles, of Connecticut; of the Interior, Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana; Attorney-General, Edward Bates, of Missouri; Postmaster-General, Montgomery Blair, of Maryland.

Next in importance was the diplomatic service, largely filled with Southern men or with others as hos-

tile to the Republican policy: men, too, who were in some instances exerting themselves in opposition to the Union and the Government which accredited them. Among the new foreign appointments were: Charles Francis Adams, of Massachusetts — the personal choice of Secretary Seward — as Minister to England; William L. Dayton, of New Jersey, Minister to France; Norman B. Judd, of Illinois, to Prussia; Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky, to Russia; John L. Motley, of Massachusetts, to Austria; Carl Schurz, of Wisconsin, to Spain; James W. Webb, of New York, to Turkey — afterward transferred to Brazil; Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, to Mexico; Anson Burlingame, of Massachusetts, to China — the third mission given to the “ancestral” State; and other Republicans to the minor courts of the Old World and the New. Consular officers, a numerous body, were also mostly changed.

It took no long time to ascertain that Disunionists in the late Cabinet had willingly left the new administration as destitute as possible of everything it would need even for self-defense. The treasury was unsupplied except through temporary expedients adopted at the eleventh hour, after loyal John A. Dix had succeeded Howell Cobb as Secretary. For under the latter’s financiering, the Government had been reduced to the strait and the humiliation of being unable to effect a necessary loan, small in amount, except on terms which the usurer might accept from a profligate. The army was insignificant in numbers at the best, and nearly all of it that was left after Twiggs surrendered to the Texas secessionists in February was out of im-

mediate reach. The navy had few vessels which were not cruising or idling far away in foreign waters. With two or three exceptions, every fort on the Southern coast beyond Old Point Comfort, whether in the confederated seceding States or not, and the navy-yards beyond Norfolk, as well as the arsenals, mints, sub-treasuries and Federal property in general in the Cotton States, had been tamely permitted to pass into the hands of the Confederates.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### *First Forty Days — The Fort Sumter Problem.*

The new President still hoped for some adjustment of the national troubles; though hope is not identical with faith. He was certainly less sanguine than Mr. Seward, who had been laboring in his own way for months past to establish an effective Union party in the South. In his inaugural, Lincoln had spoken favorably of calling a national convention, as provided for in the Constitution — a measure which Calhoun himself had once thought preferable to rash secession; had promised a continuance of the mail service to the recusant States, unless repelled, and had expressed his desire to maintain such pacific conditions as would give opportunity for calm consideration.

There was encouragement in the fact that eight of the slave-holding States, having a decided majority of the Southern population,\* had resisted secession and appeared to be still devoted to the Union — an encouragement quite substantial, provided only that the Union sentiment was earnest and increasing, not faint and failing. To retain Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina,

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\* Excluding slaves, these eight States had (in 1860) a population of 5,632,993; and the seven Secession States only 2,661,879. Of slaves the former States had an aggregate of 1,636,159; the latter, 2,307,262.

Tennessee, Maryland, Delaware, Missouri and Arkansas in their present attitude, and to leave the seven refractory States to grow weary of their experiment — which might soon collapse through reactionary or servile insurrection — yet without recognizing their assumed secession or coming into collision with any of them singly or all conjointly, seemed practicable to the Secretary of State, and its accomplishment a master stroke of statesmanship.

Nor did Mr. Seward see anything fatal to this scheme in the inaugural address, though it was more positive on some points than he would have wished. The address is to be read in its proper light as indicating the course the Administration would pursue in the absence of armed violence, coupled with the assurance that peace would continue unless the malcontents should themselves begin war. With those who were “dissatisfied” would rest the choice.

Instead of receiving the inaugural address in the conciliatory and pacific spirit in which it was written, the authors of secession pronounced it a declaration of war. On the 9th of March the Montgomery Congress passed an act to provide for a Confederate army, pursuant to the recommendation of their “chief,” Jefferson Davis. This was their response. The President never imagined, of course, that these persons were at present to be persuaded or restrained by anything he could say. His arguments and appeals were not made for their ears alone. Not only were eight slave States refusing to follow their lead, but in the Confederate seven it was believed there were large numbers of people whose hearts were not in the secession cause. Nothing

would satisfy its leaders, he well knew, short of absolute severance from the Union; but was it too late for the South, by repudiating these men altogether, to escape the abyss toward which they were guiding her?

Three days after the passage of the act to raise a Confederate army, Mr. Forsyth, of Alabama, and Mr. Crawford, of Georgia, presented themselves at the State Department in Washington in the attitude of commissioners representing "an independent nation *de facto* and *de jure*," and asking the negotiation of a treaty. The President declined all recognition of them; and with Mr. Seward's "memorandum" to this effect was inclosed a copy of the inaugural address, to which these gentlemen were referred for the views of the Government in the case. Representations, however, were made to them by Justice Campbell, who was in communication with Mr. Seward, which they construed as an assurance of the speedy evacuation of Fort Sumter.

Forts Sumter and Pickens were in those days objects of engrossing solicitude. On the morning after the inauguration the President's attention was called to a letter received the day before by the Secretary of War (Mr. Holt) from Major Anderson, indicating that unless he was sustained by a force about twenty thousand strong, it would be better to make no farther efforts to hold Fort Sumter. The Secretary was surprised — so different was this from the reports before received from Major Anderson. It was not less a surprise to the President. He conferred with Mr. Seward, who favored the proposed surrender of the fort.

The Senate, in extra session for executive business, sat until the 18th of March. Many Representatives-

elect, as well as many unreturned members whose terms had just expired, lingered in Washington, not only interesting themselves in the distribution of Government offices, but growing concerned over the prolonged inaction and reticence of the Administration touching affairs at Charleston. Senators in their places fell to discussing the subject. Among the Democrats who seemed very solicitous for an authentic avowal of the President's intention was Mr. Douglas, who sought to extort some explicit expression from the Republican side, but without much satisfaction.

The President, determined at all events to retain possession of Fort Pickens unless it was assailed and captured by force, which he would guard against by sending reinforcements and supplies, was meanwhile considering whether a like course was now practicable and expedient in regard to Fort Sumter. He learned that a former officer of the Navy, Captain Gustavus V. Fox, now in private life after eighteen years of creditable service, had proposed a plan for supplying and reinforcing the fort, directly after the failure of the *Star of the West*, and that his plan found favor with the War Department and would have been tried had not Mr. Buchanan finally withheld his consent. Captain Fox was a son-in-law of Levi Woodbury, of New Hampshire, formerly Secretary of the Treasury, to whom Postmaster-General Blair sustained the same relation. Through the medium of Mr. Blair, the President invited an interview with Fox on the 12th of March, which was had in conjunction with General Scott, at the latter's office. The General, who had approved this project in February, gave his opinion that it was not



now feasible, on account of the batteries since erected at the entrance of the harbor. With the consent of the President, Fox soon visited Charleston and Fort Sumter. Major Anderson authorized him to report that, with his present supplies, he would not be able to hold out beyond the 15th of April, and could not be relieved except by landing a large force on Morris Island. Captain Fox did not mention to him the plan under consideration, though himself convinced that the circumstances did not preclude its trial.

On the 15th of March, Lincoln sent this note to Secretary Cameron and the other Cabinet officers:

Assuming it to be possible to now provision Fort Sumter, under all the circumstances is it wise to attempt it? Please give me your opinion in writing on this question.

Mr. Cameron thought it would be "unwise"—concurring with the known views of Secretary Seward. All the other members of the Cabinet, with but two exceptions, replied to the same effect. Mr. Blair was positive and earnest in the affirmative; and Secretary Chase inclined, though less decidedly, to the same side.

Two weeks later, some days after Captain Fox's return, followed by further consultations, the President gave this order (March 29th) to the Secretary of War:

I desire that an expedition, to move by sea, be got ready to sail as early as the 6th of April next, the whole according to the memorandum attached, and that you co-operate with the Secretary of the Navy for that object.

The details of the "memorandum" were in accord with the project of Captain Fox, which, in his own language, "simply involved passing batteries with

steamers or boats at night, at right angles to their line of fire, and one thousand three hundred yards distant, a feat of which the Crimean war furnished many safe examples." It may be added that there were many similar examples at home during the next four years. The steamship *Baltic*, of the Collins line, was chartered for the main work of transportation and was to be sustained by three vessels of the Navy — the *Powhatan*, the *Pawnee* and the *Pocahontas* — the revenue cutter *Harriet Lane*, and three steam tugs. A number of armed launches, with sailors to man them, were on board the *Powhatan* for making the intended transfers from the *Baltic* to the fort. The expedition was under the command of Fox, who did not receive the President's decisive order for its departure until the 4th of April, when the preparations were still uncompleted.

The officers of the Navy received sealed orders through Secretary Welles — Captain Mercer, of the *Powhatan* to have chief command of the naval contingent. In the further attempts at secrecy, there were some irregularities, Secretary Seward preparing certain orders for signature by the President of which Mr. Welles had no knowledge at the time. Among these were two, dated April 1st, "recommended" by the Secretary of State, and signed with others coming from the State Department, giving Lieutenant David D. Porter command of the *Powhatan* and changing its destination to Pensacola harbor. These orders deprived Captain Fox of his chief naval support, as well as of the launches on which he relied, which were on board of that vessel. Secretary Welles became aware of this change as the *Powhatan* was about leaving New

York harbor, on the 6th, and by the President's authority attempted to restore the original plan, but it was now too late. That frigate was not needed at Pensacola, and rendered no substantial assistance there. An adequate naval force was already concerned in supplying and reinforcing Fort Pickens, which was successfully accomplished without Porter's help.

The absence of the *Powhatan* destroyed whatever chance of success the Fox expedition had. Its commander went to sea on the *Baltic*, and arrived off Charleston harbor in entire ignorance of the withdrawal of the *Powhatan* — afterwards explained to him by the President as an "accident." There was, however, a deliberate design in the preparation of the orders in question, which Secretary Welles did not hesitate to connect with the following dispatch sent by Mr. Seward on the 7th — to Judge Campbell now gone South: "Faith as to Sumter fully kept. Wait and see."

The date of the "accident" which detached the *Powhatan* from Fox's fleet, April 1st, also belongs to another event which should be noticed in this connection. Hitherto Mr. Seward appears to have regarded his official position as akin to that of Prime Minister — practically the head of the Administration; or at least he aspired to that power. He now directly proposed an Administration "policy" — assuming that as yet there was none — and that the President should give untrammelled authority to one of his executive officers who should be responsible for its execution.\* The policy was in substance: (1) Non-resistance to the Con-

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\* See Nicolay and Hay, "Complete Works," II., 29-30, for this communication and Lincoln's reply in full.

federates, and abandonment of the slavery issues; and (2) a belligerent attitude toward certain foreign powers — particularly France and Spain, the latter having just invaded San Domingo. Would not a foreign war, with Cuba in prospective, recall the “erring sisters” and secure a speedy restoration of the Union? That Mr. Seward had any other motive for desiring a war with Spain is hardly conceivable. However, he soon found that he had ventured too far, and received a response which definitely and finally settled all question as to his official relation to the President. What another chief executive might have deemed an unpardonable affront, was met with serene dignity, the superior informing his subordinate, in substance, that a “policy” had been duly announced in his inaugural, and that the duties to which the President had been called would not be devolved upon another.

It is not to be asserted that the President ever cast any blame upon Mr. Seward for his part in the Powhatan matter; nor is it worth while to recall the free comments of Mr. Blair and Mr. Welles, at a later date, on what they probably never ceased to consider an improper expedient of the Secretary of State to evade a charge of bad faith in giving assurances unauthorized by the President.

Notice was given to the insurgent authorities at Charleston of the dispatch of supplies for Major Anderson — in a pacific manner if not resisted by force. The only “aggression” visible, the only “coercion” threatened, was the beleaguering of two Federal forts by armed men under orders from Montgomery.

On the 11th of April — the day on which the Fox



expedition was expected to reach its destination — General Beauregard, under instructions from the Confederate Secretary of War, demanded of Major Anderson the surrender of Fort Sumter. He replied that, unless supplied with provisions within three days, or restrained by further instructions from the Government, he would at the end of that time retire. At half-past 4 o'clock on the following morning fire was opened upon the fort. Thirty large guns and seventeen mortars threw shot and shell.

Anderson, dividing his slender garrison into relief parties and waiting until they had breakfasted at their usual hour, began his response at 7 o'clock, using only the lower tier of guns. Wooden barracks left standing were exposed to the hostile shells, which burst in every direction inside the walls. Before sunset the fire of the fort ceased, but at 7 o'clock next morning was renewed. Beauregard's batteries, partially active through the night, had been in full play again for more than an hour. Soon a shell set fire to the officers' quarters, and the men left their guns to put it out, and in another hour smothering masses of smoke were pouring out from the burning barracks, which had before been repeatedly in flames less serious. The men had worked from the first with enthusiasm, and continued working until further exertion was a torture. At length, the smoke becoming thicker and thicker and the endangered magazine having been emptied into the water, the gunners left their places for good. Not long after noon the flag-staff was cut by a missile, and while the flag was momentarily down, agile ex-Senator Wigfall shot out in a boat from Morris Island, bearing a white signal; was admit-

ted by a port-hole of the fort, and through his unauthorized intervention terms of surrender were agreed upon, which Beauregard approved on the evening of Saturday.

The Baltic and some other vessels of the Fox expedition, delayed by a severe storm, had arrived within hearing of Beauregard's guns on Friday morning, too late for the original purpose, and unable to render any service except after the surrender. On Sunday afternoon, the 14th, Fort Sumter was evacuated, after a salute to its flag — a flag carefully preserved for another occasion. Except from the explosion of a gun in firing this salute (by which one man was killed and three wounded), there occurred from first to last, on either side, no recorded loss of life or serious personal injury. The fire from Fort Sumter, however, was certainly not ineffectual upon the hostile works. Outside the harbor, on Monday, the officers and men were taken on board the Baltic, which departed next day for New York.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

1861.

*Loyal Uprising — President Lincoln Calls for Seventy-five  
Thousand Soldiers — Four More States  
Revolt — The Capital Isolated.*

In the North, men of all classes and all parties were united in their patriotic ardor to avenge the fall of Fort Sumter and to maintain the national authority. New York, Philadelphia and the other great cities, whose interests had made so many people sensitively conservative, were at once decorated all over with national flags in token of the universal spirit. In every lesser city, in village, hamlet, factory or shop, on farms and waters, with or without symbols, the spirit was the same.

Immediately after Anderson's forced surrender was known at the White House, President Lincoln prepared his proclamation, issued on April 15th, declaring that, in seven States named, there were unlawful "combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals by law"; and calling out the militia to the number of seventy-five thousand men, "in order to suppress said combinations and to cause the law to be duly executed." He appealed to all loyal citizens "to favor, facilitate and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity, and the existence of our national Union,

and the perpetuity of our popular government, and to redress wrongs already long enough endured."

In the same document he called an extra session of Congress, to begin on the 4th of July.

Of the eight Southern States asked to send their respective quotas under the militia call, nearly all had Governors in sympathy with South Carolina and Secession; and these returned defiant answers to the demand. "The militia of Virginia," wrote Governor Letcher, "will not be furnished to the powers at Washington for any such use or purpose as they have in view." "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States," said Governor Magoffin. Governor Harris, of Tennessee, was insolently explicit; Governor Ellis, of North Carolina, more politely but hardly less emphatically, and the Governors of Missouri and Arkansas, all made known their purpose not to heed the call. The Governors of Maryland and Delaware did not in words refuse; and there were more than enough volunteers speedily offered from either State to fill its quota. Nor is it anticipating very much to say that from the other six Southern States, whose Governors were thus recusant, there were added to the Union armies several times the number of soldiers thus asked, and ultimately (exclusive of colored men) a large multiple. All through the free States the response to the call for troops was hearty and more than ample.

On the evening of the 14th, in the first excitement over the news from Charleston, Senator Douglas made an ever-memorable call at the White House. He came voluntarily to promise the President a cordial support in



the Secession war now begun. He read with approval the proclamation already prepared, questioning only as to the number of men called for, which he thought would better have been at least four hundred thousand. He knew the South, he added, and that the war was to be war in earnest—a war of magnitude. The substance of this interview, as disclosed by Douglas himself, was telegraphed to the country next morning, with commanding effect on his partisan supporters.

This is the last incident to be recorded in the long personal intercourse and in the constantly recurring relations between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. The Senator's proffer of service—warmly appreciated and gratefully recognized by the President—was followed up manfully in speeches and letters from this day onward. One of the most eloquent of all was his speech at the capital of Illinois. Douglas had then not many weeks to live. He presently returned to Chicago, where he was prostrated with fever, and passed away on the 3d day of June.

The crisis, which gave unity and strength in the North, brought no advantage to the Union side in the eight Southern States that had hitherto stood out against secession. The Virginia convention had voted nearly two to one against the proposed "ordinance" on the 4th of April; but the convention tarried; adverse influences were plainly taking effect; the Union majority was crumbling. At length, after it was known in Richmond that the Confederate executive had determined to "reduce" Fort Sumter without further delay, a committee was sent by the convention to interrogate President Lincoln as to the policy he meant to pursue

towards the Confederate States. The committee had an interview with the President on Saturday, April 13th — cannon at the moment thundering in Charleston harbor, or not yet cooled after Anderson's capitulation. He gave a written answer, adhering to the positions of his inaugural, from which he quoted decisively, and the committee returned home still "dissatisfied."

Wild tumult prevailed at Richmond on news of the capture of Fort Sumter. The convention wrapped itself in darkness, holding secret sessions, and on the 17th passed an ordinance of secession, nominally subject to a popular vote on the 23d of May. Regardless of a condition now so unimportant, there were hurried movements to seize the Government works and armory at Harper's Ferry, and the navy-yard, stores, guns, and vessels at and near Norfolk, before the action of the convention should become publicly known.

On the 25th of April, Governor Letcher proclaimed the adhesion of Virginia to the Southern Confederacy, under a compact which ignored any further voting the people might trouble themselves to do later. Tennessee and Arkansas were in like manner provisionally annexed by their disunionist Governors on the 6th of May; and North Carolina adopted a secession ordinance on the 20th. Despite the madness of the hour, a cordon of slaveholding States stretching across the country — Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, with loyal West Virginia, soon made a separate State — still remained on the Union side.

Addressing a joyfully excited crowd at Montgomery on the evening of April 12th, the Confederate Secretary of War said:

No man can tell when the war commenced this day will end; but I will prophecy that the flag which now flaunts the breeze here will float over the dome of the old capitol at Washington before the 1st of May.

How Lincoln regarded his own relation to this beginning appears with sufficient clearness from a letter of approbation and confidence addressed by him (May 1st) to Captain Fox, saying:

I sincerely regret that the failure of the late attempt to provision Fort Sumter should be the source of any annoyance to you. The practicability of your plan was not, in fact, brought to test. By reason of a gale well known in advance to be possible, and not improbable, the tugs, an essential part of the plan, never reached the ground, while, by an accident for which you were in no wise responsible and possibly I, to some extent, was, you were deprived of a war vessel, with her men, which you deemed of great importance to the enterprise. . . . You and I both anticipated that the cause of the country would be advanced by making the attempt to provision Fort Sumter, even if it should fail; and it is no small consolation now to feel that our anticipation is justified by the event.

In a few hours after he received the call for troops, Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, had one regiment of militia, the Sixth, at its rendezvous, ready for departure South. Pennsylvania, being nearer, first had a militia battalion at the national capital. From New York the well disciplined Seventh Regiment was about the same time on its way. Every Northern State responded with promptness and energy. In the loyal "War Governors" President Lincoln ever found a quick help and a strong stay.

The spirit already roused was intensified by the attacks of a Baltimore mob on the Sixth Massachusetts

Regiment while passing through the city. Here the first blood of Union soldiers was shed on the memorable anniversary of Lexington and Concord, April 19th. A Pennsylvania regiment that was following, on reaching the outer railway station, turned back under orders toward Philadelphia, the mob now having possession of Baltimore. The Massachusetts Sixth had meanwhile fought its way through the city, going on by rail to Washington.

These were but incidents in a week full of stirring events, which disclosed a fixed purpose and concerted action to surround and isolate the capital; to gain possession of all the Federal property in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia; to disperse the Government; and to carry the rebellion quite to the northern limit of slavery. On the eve of the outbreak in Baltimore, secessionist forces were on their way to seize Norfolk and Harper's Ferry. Trains bearing Union soldiers destined for Washington were stopped by disabled tracks and destroyed bridges on every railway directly connecting the North with Baltimore, from which point alone, save by the branch from Annapolis — the western line by way of the intermediate Relay House being broken — was there any communication by rail with Washington. Intrenchments were thrown up on the banks of the Potomac River, below the city, and mounted with guns, to cut off communication by water. Virginia militia were pushed forward to break the western connections by the Baltimore and Ohio railway beyond Harper's Ferry. Save the military companies of the District (some non-residents temporarily there, also organizing as volunteers) and the small force of regu-



lars and marines, the only troops in Washington during this anxious and critical week were: the Pennsylvania companies, which arrived on Tuesday evening; another battalion, with a battery, from the same State, which came on the 18th, passing through Baltimore that day; and the Massachusetts Sixth, which forced its way through on the 19th. From that day until the 25th communication with the outer world was almost wholly cut off.

Directly after the secret vote for secession in the convention at Richmond, a committee of Virginians demanded of the authorities of the Baltimore and Ohio railway a pledge that no Federal soldiers should be transported over their main line, or any of the munitions of war from Harper's Ferry, threatening, if this were refused, to blow up their Potomac bridge at that place. Lieutenant Jones, in charge of the armory and arsenal there, with a command of only forty-five men, was apprised of the near approach of Virginia militia, about twenty-five hundred strong, on Thursday evening (the 18th), and, after prompt measures to burn the Government works and to destroy the property stored there, including fifteen thousand Springfield muskets (which were not rendered completely useless to their captors), he started with his little force at 10 o'clock that night, by the shortest route, to Chambersburg, in Pennsylvania. He reached Hagerstown next morning, having traveled thirty miles; and news of the taking of Harper's Ferry fanned the excitement in Baltimore, where, for a week following, the mob, swelled by large numbers of desperate men from other places, swayed the city — Secessionists cowing Union men, and finally coercing Gov-

ernor Hicks into protesting against the passage of Federal troops through the city, or even through Maryland at all, to the national capital, surrounded though it was on every side by either Maryland or Virginia. He also yielded to the demand for an extra session of the Legislature — which he had hitherto resolutely refused to call — fixing the 26th of May for its assembling.

Matters were to be hurried at the utmost speed; the ardor was at its height, the hour auspicious; not a moment must be lost. The Confederate chief dreamed that his Maryland and Virginia braves were already leaping in wild death dance around the fast-bound and doomed victim.

On the day after the Massachusetts soldiers were attacked in Baltimore, a committee visited the President on behalf of Governor Hicks and Mayor Brown, with representations sufficiently indicated in the following response, addressed to those officials:

*Gentlemen:* Your letter by Messrs. Bond, Dobbin and Brune is received. I tender you both my sincere thanks for your efforts to keep the peace in the trying situation in which you are placed. For the future, troops must be brought here, but I make no point of bringing them through Baltimore. Without any military knowledge myself, of course I must leave details to General Scott. He hastily said this morning, in the presence of these gentlemen, "March them around Baltimore, and not through it." I sincerely hope the General, on further reflection, will consider this practicable and proper, and that you will not object to it. By this a collision of the people of Baltimore with the troops will be avoided, unless they go out of the way to seek it. I hope you will exert your influence to prevent this. Now and ever, I shall do all in my power for peace, consistently with the maintenance of the Government.

On the night of the 20th the President telegraphed to Governor Hicks:

I desire to consult with you and the Mayor of Baltimore relative to preserving the peace in Maryland. Please come immediately by special train, which you can take at Baltimore, or, if necessary, one can be sent from hence. Answer forthwith.

Both the Governor and the Mayor had issued proclamations two days before — the former counseling against any “rash step,” calling on the people “to obey the laws and to aid the constituted authorities in their endeavors to preserve the fair fame of our State untarnished,” and assuring them “that no troops will be sent from Maryland unless it be for the defense of the national capital.” On the very next day (the 19th) came the outbreak deprecated by these manifestoes. All seemed to be changed as in a moment; even the Governor and the Mayor were at least getting uncertain. The Governor not being in the city on the morning of the 21st, when the above dispatch was received, the Mayor went without him, and had a protracted interview with the President, at which the Cabinet and the Lieutenant-General were present. Mr. Brown, as reported by himself immediately after, told the President that “the excitement was great” in Baltimore; that “the people of all classes were fully aroused, and it was impossible for any one to answer for the consequences of the presence of Northern troops anywhere within our borders.” The President “frankly acknowledged this difficulty, and said that the Government would only ask the city authorities to use their best efforts with respect to those under their jurisdiction. The interview ter-

minated with the distinct assurance on the part of the President that no more troops would be sent through Baltimore unless obstructed in their transit in other directions, and with the understanding that the city authorities should do their best to restrain their own people."

This, it is to be remembered, is the version of Mr. Brown, and the alleged promise of the President manifestly could have related only to the existing emergency. But the Mayor had not yet left Washington when news came of such an excitement in Baltimore over the approach of troops by the Northern Central Railway (from the Harrisburg direction), which were intended to be marched from Cockeysville across the country to the Relay House, that for the time they were ordered back to Harrisburg. Even "in other directions," any transit through Maryland, it appeared, was to be "obstructed."

Although during all this dark week the President had with him but a few hundred soldiers, entirely inadequate even for the protection of Washington, to say nothing of subjugating rebellious Baltimore and opening communications northward and westward, there began to be mutterings of discontent in New York and elsewhere because all these things had not been done at once by the Government. There came to be talk, too, with distortions and misconceptions enough, as to the interview with Mayor Brown, about "negotiations" between the Government and "Maryland traitors." How restive many people were becoming in the later of these dubious days is well illustrated by the letter of a loyal New York millionaire then prominent (George Law), written to the President on the 25th:



The people of the free States [said Mr. Law] have now been for some time cut off from communication with the capital of their country by a mob in the city of Baltimore. . . . All facilities by mail and telegraph have been cut off by the same unlawful assemblage in Baltimore and other points of Maryland, at a time when free communication is so much required between the free States and Washington. The public mind is already excited to the highest point that this state of things has been so long tolerated; . . . it is demanded of the Government that they at once take measures to open and establish those lines of communication, and that they protect and preserve them from any further interruption. Unless this is done, the people will be compelled to take it into their own hands, let the consequences be what they may, and let them fall where they will.

The great commercial city was not alone in feeling that something must be speedily done. Elsewhere, and not least in the West, it was a common sentiment: "The troops must go through Baltimore, even if they have to march over the ashes of the city."

While the people of New York City were astir, and the veteran General Wool had come down from his post at Troy to do anything needed of him, even without orders, the authorities at Washington had been using effective methods to relieve the situation. Secretary Cameron had managed to get a trusted agent through to New York, clothed with some extraordinary powers, which he did not fail to use (for which the Secretary was censured afterward by Congress), and General Scott was contriving to open up a way from the North to the capital. In fact, the very day Mr. Law was writing so vigorously, communication was successfully restored, and new troops were arriving in Washington.

The Eighth Regiment of Massachusetts militia, accompanied by General B. F. Butler, and the New York

Seventh had reached Perryville, on the Susquehanna, some days before. Finding further transit by rail impracticable, Butler had availed himself of the railway company's ferry-boat there, and taken his men thereon by the river and the bay to Annapolis, where he possessed himself of the old ship *Constitution*, then in use at the Naval Academy; later went into camp on shore, regardless of the personal protest of Governor Hicks; sent the ferry-boat back for more troops and for supplies, and began to advance along the line of the Annapolis Branch railway, of which the track had been torn up and the locomotives disabled. Both the rails and the engines were put in order as rapidly as his soldiers, including many skilled machinists, could do the work, and soon trains were running to the Junction and to Washington, bearing their freight of Northern legions, and letting in full daylight on the darkness of the capital city. The Seventh Regiment of New York was the first to arrive there, marching in its beautiful way down Pennsylvania Avenue, to the delight of a multitude of welcoming beholders. Other soldiers came with little delay, and henceforward at will.

The severest calamity that had actually befallen the Government during this time was in the losses it had suffered at Norfolk and Gosport. Among the vessels there were the steam frigate *Merrimac*, forty guns — scuttled by the commandant, but afterwards raised and made into a formidable iron-clad by the Confederates; the *Cumberland*, in which the officers of the post made their escape; the *Plymouth*, *Raritan*, *Germantown*, *Columbia*, *Dauphin*, the old three-decked *Pennsylvania*, the *Delaware*, and the *Columbus* — the last two being

dismantled seventy-fours. There were also two or three thousand cannon, as estimated, munitions, stores, timber, and other valuable property, either destroyed or captured. In general, the destruction aimed at was far from effectual. The actual aggregate cost of all these classes of property, in time of peace, was reckoned as high as ten million dollars. Great as was the pecuniary sacrifice here — in comparison with which that at Harper's Ferry was but slight — the losses in both cases were enhanced by the fact that these war materials were pressingly needed and could not be readily replaced.

As to Norfolk and Gosport there were, very naturally, complaints of culpable neglect or mismanagement. The officer in command there, Captain McCauley, was well advanced in years, and without judicial inquiry was directly after placed on the retired list. Captain Paulding had been dispatched from Washington with the steam frigate *Pawnee* to that post on the 19th, with orders to supersede McCauley. Arriving at Old Point Comfort next day, he took four hundred and fifty Massachusetts soldiers on board, and reached Gosport in the evening. Paulding had discretionary powers, but was instructed to take care, at all events, that the Government property in that quarter should not fall into the hands of the insurgents. He found that McCauley had already begun the work of destruction, and tried to make it complete. Without awaiting attack, he departed at midnight, his retreating course being illuminated by the flames of ships and boats, marine barracks, storehouses, and other combustible materials of the abandoned post, of which the enemy took prompt possession.

Harper's Ferry was occupied by Virginia militia soon after the retirement of Lieutenant Jones. There, as at Norfolk, the insurgents saved much valuable property. The important bridge of the Baltimore and Ohio Railway at that point was destroyed by them, and this great western thoroughfare closed.

Fortress Monroe, fortunately secured in time, was presently further reinforced by the arrival of the First Vermont Regiment, under Colonel J. W. Phelps.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

1861.

### *Taking Up the Burden of War.*

On the very day, as it happened, that Washington was isolated by the Baltimore outbreak, the President proclaimed a blockade of the insurgent ports. Whether blockade or embargo were better was discussed in Cabinet. Did not declaring a blockade under the war power of the Government involve a concession of belligerent rights to the Confederates? Secretary Welles, whose department was charged with executing the great undertaking, favored an embargo. Secretary Seward, to whom the matter belonged in its foreign relations, believed a blockade would involve fewer complications, and that British construction would deny the right of a government to close any port not in its actual possession. To maintain a blockade of the extent proclaimed would require a large and effective naval force; but in this respect the embargo, which avoided some seeming inconsistencies, would have little advantage, and to gain and keep actual possession of all the Southern ports was at present out of the question. The President appears to have agreed with Mr. Seward from the first.

At the beginning of the War of 1812, Jefferson wrote privately (June 28th) to President Madison: "Upon

the whole, I have known no war declared under more favorable circumstances." He confidently expected the prompt conquest of Canada and an early peace. On the 6th of February following, after disasters and mortifications, he wrote to Madison of the events of the war:

Our first entrance on them has been peculiarly inauspicious. Our men were good, but force without conduct is easily baffled. The Creator has not thought proper to mark those on the forehead who are of stuff to make good Generals. We are first, therefore, to seek them blindfold, and then let them learn the trade at the expense of losses

President Lincoln, at the beginning of a great war, had at his side a veteran commander famous in both hemispheres. Secretary Chase justly declared that General Winfield Scott was "venerated" by the American people. The South would have deemed it victory itself to gain the grand old Virginian as their leader in arms. But the Lieutenant-General was as unhesitating and as faithful now as when, thirty years earlier, he aided in putting down the first outbreak of disunion in South Carolina. The very name of Winfield Scott was assuring.

Aside from the blockade, which was deemed of prime moment, two objects required immediate care. First, to hold the national capital, confidently claimed by the Confederate press and orating leaders as a speedy prey; and, secondly, to re-possess Federal forts and property already captured by the seceding authorities. Military and naval preparations for these ends were pushed with such rapidity as the conditions permitted. The late Adjutant-General Cooper and Brigadier-General Lee — in whom Scott had specially confided — had at the last

moment gone over to the Confederate side, carrying with them all the knowledge of affairs implied by their late positions. Other defections, less conspicuous, from the surrender of General Twiggs downward, had thinned the army service and made many new appointments and assignments necessary. Commander Buchanan, in charge of the navy-yard, like Captain J. B. Magruder, of the army, whose battery was in evidence on inauguration day, both joined the Confederates. So did many naval officers of rank, though they surrendered no vessels or property confided to them. The departments of Washington, under General Joseph K. F. Mansfield; of Annapolis, under General B. F. Butler (headquarters at Bladensburg), and of Pennsylvania (including that State and Delaware), under General Robert Patterson, were announced on the 27th of April. A fourth department was added on the 10th of May, consisting of the States of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, under General George B. McClellan, with headquarters at Cincinnati.

In his message to the Confederate Congress, which met at Montgomery on the 29th of April, Mr. Davis announced his purpose of issuing letters of marque and reprisal, and predicted that before many weeks "the whole of the slaveholding States of the late Union will respond to the call of honor and affection, and, by uniting their fortunes with ours, promote our common interests and secure our common safety." He gives the number of Confederate troops "now in the field at Charleston, Pensacola, Forts Morgan, Jackson, St. Philip, and Pulaski" as nineteen thousand; "while there are sixteen thousand more now en route for Virginia;" states his purpose to organize "an army of one hun-

dred thousand men," and adds that volunteers "are constantly tendering their services far in excess of our wants." He had, in fact, issued a call for one hundred thousand men two days after Lincoln's inauguration. In this message occur the familiar words, so applicable to many troublous situations: "All we ask is, to be let alone."

On the 3d of May, President Lincoln called for forty-two thousand soldiers to serve for three years, if required, and for eighteen thousand men for the navy; and invited enlistments to fill up eight regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and one of artillery, for the regular army. More than the specified number responded to this second call, which Congress was trusted to sustain and legalize.

The storm which had for many days so furiously raged in Baltimore, and which seemed on a sudden to have swept over all Maryland, leaving scarcely any visible traces of Unionism, began to lull after a way for Government troops was opened through the State, and regiment after regiment continued to pour into Washington. Governor Hicks, in his message of April 27th to the Legislature (convened at Frederick), pointed out the deplorable condition of Maryland if made the seat of war, and counseled "neutrality." A reaction was beginning to set in; the Union men were regaining their self-possession; and even in Baltimore a large Union meeting was held on the night of the 4th of May. On the day following, General Butler advanced two regiments from Annapolis Junction — which he had firmly held for the last ten days — to the Relay House. On the same day a committee of the Maryland Legislature



waited on the President, asking that Baltimore be spared the evils of military occupation, and deprecating chastisement for the late offenses. In reply he gave no other assurance than that the public interests, and not any spirit of revenge, would determine his measures. Four days later a body of troops about three thousand strong, transported by steamers from Perryville, landed at Locust Point, in Baltimore; the railway from the city to the Relay House was promptly reopened; the rail and wire communications with Washington, Harrisburg and Philadelphia were restored; and the city of Baltimore (on the 13th) was securely occupied. On the next day Governor Hicks issued a call for four regiments of volunteers for the Federal service.

General Robert E. Lee was put in command of the "forces of the Confederate States in Virginia" on the 10th of May. General George B. McClellan was at the same date commissioned by President Lincoln as a Major-General of the regular army. Both these commanders, soon to find a field in West Virginia, were graduates of West Point, and had served in Mexico. Lee resided on the Custis estate, "Arlington Heights," across the Potomac, opposite Washington. The President, highly estimating Lee's capacity, was ready to promote him to be virtual head of the army in the field; but, much to the disappointment of Scott, his favorite chose to fight on the other side, "following his State." General McClellan, a native of Philadelphia, son of a distinguished surgeon, had, after graduation at West Point, served as an engineer officer under Scott in Mexico; and under the Pierce administration had been sent abroad — on "holiday service" — to observe the armies and opera-

tions of the Crimean War. Soon after returning from Europe and completing his report, he resigned his commission as captain, and became a railroad superintendent. As such he was living in Cincinnati when appointed Major-General.

On the same 10th of May, Nathaniel Lyon — a native of Connecticut, a graduate of West Point, and a captain in the regular army — struck a signal blow in St. Louis. Though the people of Missouri had voted down secession, their Governor, Claiborne F. Jackson, like the Governors of North Carolina and Tennessee, tried to swing his State into the Confederate current. He was prevented from seizing the Government arsenal and its large supply of arms by the prompt action of Lyon, co-operating with F. P. Blair, Jr., and other Union leaders, in removing the arms to the Illinois side of the river, and in breaking up a secession camp then forming in St. Louis. Next day the veteran General Harney, commander of the department, returned, after an absence from his post, and one of his first acts was to enter into an agreement with General Sterling Price, the Governor's militia chief, by which the latter was to have the whole responsibility of maintaining order, while Harney was to make no military movement and to avoid every act tending to produce jealousy and excitement. This compact was overruled at Washington, and Harney was superseded by Lyon, under whom a force was organized for active work. The will of the President was manifested in these proceedings rather than that of the Lieutenant-General, who was thought by his critics to have preferred the easy moderation of Harney to the impulsive zeal of Lyon.

On the 24th of May — the day after the ceremony of ratifying secession had been performed in Virginia — part of General Mansfield's force was sent across the Potomac to occupy Arlington Heights and Alexandria. Before this date the country immediately south of these points was little known to the military authorities in Washington. For weeks a Confederate flag flying from a housetop in Alexandria had been visible from the White House. There had been little restriction on intercourse with the South in general, except on that side, where there was no real security to Union men, either Northern or native. The debts due from Southern to Northern business men — many millions in total amount — had been expressly repudiated; trade between the two sections had been suspended; the lower Mississippi River was no longer free; and the old relations of superficial amity were at an end. Yet for disunionists coming north there was hitherto no danger or difficulty. The special employment of spies by the Confederates would have been quite superfluous. Of course this leniency, not to say laxness, must not last always. Lines were now to be drawn.

The movement across the Potomac was executed without resistance. The only casualty of note attending it was occasioned by the ardor of Colonel Ellsworth, whose regiment of Zouaves, enlisted in New York City, was among the first of the troops to land at Alexandria. With his own hand Ellsworth pulled down the flag which had so long defiantly floated above the Marshall House; whereupon, as he descended from the roof, he was shot dead on the stairway by the hotel proprietor, who was himself at once killed by a sergeant accom-



panying Ellsworth. The loss of this officer, one of the party accompanying Lincoln from Illinois, and the first of his rank to fall in this war, profoundly affected the President, who, with Mrs. Lincoln, met the lifeless soldier at the navy-yard, brought there on the vessel which carried him with his men to Alexandria in the morning. The body was taken to the Executive mansion, and, after funeral honors, was sent to his early home near Troy, New York, for burial. The President said in a letter to Ellsworth's parents (May 25th): "In the untimely loss of your noble son, our affliction here is scarcely less than your own. . . . In size, in years, and in youthful appearance a boy only, his power to command men was surpassingly great. This power, combined with a fine intellect, an indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him the best natural talent in that department I ever knew."

Two days after the occupation of the south bank of the Potomac the postal service was suspended in the seceding States, except in Tennessee and West Virginia. To support the Unionists in the latter quarter, a force had been gathering under General McClellan, who, from his headquarters in Cincinnati, on the day of the Alexandria movement, issued his order for an advance into Virginia from the west. Colonel B. F. Kelley set forward with his regiment, the First Virginia, from Belaire, and Colonel J. B. Steedman, with the Fourteenth Ohio, from Parkersburg, along the two branches of the Baltimore and Ohio Railway respectively, towards their junction at Grafton. Other regiments followed, all concentrating at that point unopposed. On the 2d of June a detachment led by Colonel Dumont, of Indiana, sur-



prised and broke up a hostile camp several miles southward, at Philippi. A proclamation issued from headquarters at Grafton called upon the people to arm for their protection and for the support of the constitutional government; and a convention of loyal Virginians at Wheeling, on the 17th of June, formally repudiated the Richmond Secession ordinance. The convention also declared vacant all offices the incumbents of which had sustained the action of Governor Letcher and the Secession authorities, whether such officers were executive, legislative, or judicial. A provisional State government was at once organized, with Francis H. Pierpont for Governor. As soon as practicable, a State Legislature was chosen by the Union people, and United States Senators were chosen to fill the seats vacated by Messrs. Hunter and Mason. Elections were also held for Representatives in Congress in all the Virginia districts in which Union men had opportunity to vote. The government thus organized—the earliest precedent in “reconstruction”—was in due time recognized by the President and by Congress as the legitimate State government of Virginia.

On the first advance of his troops into Western Virginia, General McClellan had issued a proclamation, in which he said: “Notwithstanding all that has been said by the traitors to induce you to believe that our advent among you will be signalized by interference with your slaves, understand one thing clearly—not only will we abstain from all such interference, but we will, on the contrary, with an iron hand, crush any attempt at insurrection on their part.” On taking the field in person, he said in another manifesto, dated June 23d, that his

command, "headed by Virginia troops," was "rapidly occupying all Western Virginia," and added: "Your houses, families, property, and all your rights will be religiously respected. . . . We have come to save, not to upturn."

In pushing back towards the mountains the forces that had been gathering in his front, McClellan came into collision with the enemy at Laurel Hill on the 10th of July, and again at Rich Mountain on the 12th. The numbers in the field on either side were not very considerable, and the nature of the ground was unfavorable for fighting on a large scale. The insurgents were beaten; many of them, with their immediate commander, Colonel Pegram, were captured. Those who escaped were pursued as far as Carrick's Ford, where, attempting to make a stand, their chief commander, General Garnett, and a number of his men were killed, and the rout was complete. The victorious General sent to the War Department this inspiring bulletin:

General Garnett and his forces have been routed, and his baggage and one gun taken. His army is completely demoralized. General Garnett was killed while attempting to rally his forces at Carrick's Ford, near St. George.

We have completely annihilated the enemy in Western Virginia.

Our loss is but thirteen killed and not more than forty wounded, while the enemy's loss is not far from two hundred killed, and the number of prisoners we have taken will amount to at least one thousand. We have captured seven of the enemy's guns in all. . . .

Our success is complete, and I firmly believe that secession is killed in this section of the country.

There were, meanwhile, active movements under General Lyon in Missouri. On the 12th of June, Gov-

ernor Jackson had called for fifty thousand militia to repel "invasion." After the breaking up of his camp at St. Louis (May 10th), he had begun to organize an army at the State Capital, Jefferson City. Lyon approaching him with such small force as was now at his disposal, Jackson withdrew on the 14th, and Lyon occupied the town. Learning that General Sterling Price, whom the Governor had joined, was preparing to make a stand at Booneville, Lyon advanced, engaged the enemy there, and routed him. The Unionists immediately set about reorganizing the State government, through a State convention, and the close of July found Hamilton R. Gamble installed as Governor.

East of the Alleghany Mountains events had been less lively. Mansfield's command south of the Potomac had at once begun fortifying the approaches to the capital by the Aqueduct bridge at Georgetown and by the Long bridge at Washington, while earthworks were thrown up for the protection of Alexandria. On the 27th of May, General Irvin McDowell was put in command of the new Department of Northwestern Virginia, with headquarters at Arlington Heights, Mansfield retaining command in the District of Columbia.

Fresh regiments, as they continued to arrive, were sent into camps of instruction near by, on either side of the river. All through the month of June and well on into July the Union lines had been but slightly extended into Virginia — scarcely more, in fact, than was necessary to find convenient camping-ground. A Confederate force under General Beauregard had early taken possession of Manassas Junction, less than thirty



miles distant, threatening Washington, either directly or through an invasion of Maryland. At Manassas the enemy was nearer both to Harper's Ferry and to Acquia Creek than was the army at Washington; and his position had the further advantage of commanding the railway communications with the Shenandoah Valley, a region rich in agricultural productions and live stock, and opening across the Potomac into Maryland and Pennsylvania. In this valley, too, the Confederates had a force under General Joseph E. Johnston so placed as to be either in the advance, sustained by Beauregard, in a movement into Maryland across the Potomac above, or to be a support for the latter should he move directly on Washington by Centreville, or through Maryland by the lower Potomac, where there was a smaller force under General Holmes at Acquia Creek. This double or triple menace kept the Union forces divided, under McDowell and Patterson, who were in much less ready communication with each other than were their adversaries.

General Patterson took up his headquarters at Chambersburg, on the Pennsylvania side, and on the 3d of June issued an address to his soldiers, in which he said they would "soon meet the insurgents," and must bear in mind that while it was their duty to punish sedition, they "must protect the loyal, and, should the occasion offer, at once suppress servile insurrection." Little was heard of this army, however, for weeks, except news of a skirmish at Falling Waters (July 2d), while on the move from Chambersburg southward to cross by Williamsport to Harper's Ferry.



General B. F. Butler was appointed a Major-General of volunteers on the 16th of May, and assigned to the command of a new military department, which included parts of Southeastern Virginia and the States of North and South Carolina. Transferring his command at Baltimore to General N. P. Banks, recently raised to the same rank, Butler reached his new headquarters at Fortress Monroe on the 22d. In this quarter, on the Confederate side, there were forces under General John B. Magruder and General Benjamin Huger — both lately of the regular army — occupying Yorktown and Norfolk. A small force sent toward Yorktown from Fortress Monroe in the night-time (June 10th) met with a bloody repulse at Big Bethel — an affair of little military consequence, but much deplored for brave lives needlessly sacrificed.

The special elections in Maryland and Kentucky late in June resulted in the choice of a nearly unanimous Union delegation to Congress from each — five to one in the former and nine to one in the latter. The popular vote in Kentucky aggregated over ninety-two thousand for the Union against less than thirty-seven thousand for secession.

Congress met on the 4th of July, pursuant to the President's call. Galusha A. Grow, of Pennsylvania, was chosen Speaker of the House of Representatives, and ex-Representative Emerson Etheridge, of Tennessee, Clerk.

In his message Lincoln concisely stated the condition of national affairs at the beginning of his official service and since; reviewed the whole question of secession, and placed the responsibility for the war, in its

actual inception, upon the insurgents, whom he had not assailed by force or menace, or given any pretext for resorting to arms against the Government. The policy he chose "looked to the exhaustion of all peaceful measures before a resort to any stronger ones." The assault upon Fort Sumter was in no sense a matter of self-defense, for the assailants well knew that "the garrison in the fort could by no possibility commit aggression upon them," and that the Government desired "merely to maintain visible possession, and thus to preserve the Union from actual and immediate dissolution," trusting to "time, discussion, and the ballot-box for final adjustment; and they assailed and reduced the fort for precisely the reverse object, to drive out the visible authority of the Federal Union, thus forcing it to immediate dissolution. The issue thus forced upon the country — immediate dissolution or blood — embraces more than the fate of these United States:

It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a Constitutional Republic or Democracy, a government of the people by the same people, can or can not maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in numbers to control the administration according to the organic law in any case, can always, upon the pretenses made in this case, or any other pretenses, or arbitrarily without any pretense, break up their Government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask, "Is there in all Republics this inherent and fatal weakness?" Must a government of necessity be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence? So viewing the issue, no choice was left but to call out the war power of the Government, and so to resist the force employed for its destruction by force for its preservation. The call was

made, and the response of the country was most gratifying, surpassing in unanimity and spirit the most sanguine expectations. Yet none of the States commonly called slave States, except Delaware, gave a regiment through regular organization. . . .

The border States, so-called, were not uniform in their action, some of them being almost for the Union, while in others, as in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas, the Union sentiment was nearly repressed and silenced. The course taken in Virginia was the most remarkable, perhaps the most important. A convention, elected by the people of that State to consider this very question of disrupting the Federal Union, was in session at the capital of Virginia when Fort Sumter fell. To this body the people had chosen a large majority of professed Union men. Almost immediately after the fall of Sumter many members of that majority went over to the original disunion minority, and with them adopted an ordinance for withdrawing the State from the Union. Whether this change was wrought by their great approval of the assault upon Sumter, or their great resentment at the Government's resistance to that assault, is not definitely known. . . . They formally entered into a treaty of temporary alliance with the so-called Confederate States, and sent members to their Congress at Montgomery, and finally they permitted the insurrectionary government to be transferred to the capitol at Richmond. The people of Virginia have thus allowed this giant insurrection to make its nest within her borders, and this Government has no choice left but to deal with it where it finds it, and it has the less to regret as the loyal citizens have, in due form, claimed its protection. Those loyal citizens this Government is bound to recognize and protect as being Virginia. . . .

It is now recommended that you give the legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one; that you place at the control of the Government for the work at least 400,000 men and \$400,000,000. . . . One of the greatest perplexities of the Government is to avoid receiving troops faster than it can provide for them; in a word, the people will save their Government if the Government will do its part only indifferently well. . . .



It might seem at first thought to be of little difference whether the present movement at the South be called secession or rebellion. The movers, however, well understand the difference. . . . The sophism itself is that any State of the Union may, consistently with the Nation's Constitution, and therefore lawfully and peacefully, withdraw from the Union without the consent of the Union or of any other State. . . . With rebellion thus sugar-coated, they have been drugging the public mind of their section for more than thirty years, and until at length they have brought many good men to a willingness to take up arms against the Government the day after some assemblage of men have enacted the farcical pretense of taking their State out of the Union, who could have been brought to no such thing the day before. . . . This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object it is to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partial and temporary departures, from necessity, this is the leading object of the Government for whose existence we contend. I am most happy to believe that the plain people understand and appreciate this. It is worthy of note that while in this, the Government's hour of trial, large numbers of those in the army and navy who have been favored with the offices, have resigned and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier or common sailor is known to have deserted his flag. . . . This is the patriotic instinct of plain people. They understand without an argument that destroying the Government which was made by Washington means no good to them. . . .

It was with the deepest regret that the Executive found the duty of employing the war power in defense of the Government. Forced upon him, he could but perform this duty or surrender the existence of the Government. . . . As a private citizen the Executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish, much less could he, in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as these free people had confided to him. He felt that he had no moral right to shrink,



nor even to count the chances of his own life in what might follow.

In full view of his great responsibility, he has so far done what he has deemed his duty. You will now, according to your own judgment, perform yours. He sincerely hopes that your views and your actions may so accord with his as to assure all faithful citizens who have been disturbed in their rights, of a certain and speedy restoration to them, under the Constitution and laws, and having thus chosen our cause without guile, and with pure purpose, let us renew our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts.

Congress authorized the President to call for five hundred thousand volunteers. instead of the four hundred thousand asked, and made the needed appropriations. A joint resolution was introduced in the Senate on the 6th, by Mr. Wilson, to legalize and confirm the action of the President in calling for troops on the 15th of April; in declaring a blockade; in authorizing suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* at any point on or near the military line between Philadelphia and Washington (April 27th) and on the coast of Florida (May 10th), and in increasing the army and navy forces by his proclamation of May 3d.

Mr. Breckinridge (July 16th) made an elaborate speech on this resolution, declaring that the acts specified were "usurpations on the part of the Executive," and that "this high officer should be rebuked by both houses of Congress."

The President [he said] has just established blockades. Where is the clause in the Constitution which authorizes it? . . . The Constitution declares that Congress alone has power to declare war, yet the President has made war. . . . The resolution proceeds to approve the act of the President enlisting men for three and five years. By what authority

of the Constitution and law has he done this? The power is not in the Constitution, nor granted by law. . . . The resolution goes on to recite that the President has suspended the writ of *habeas corpus*, and proposes to ratify and make that valid.

This latter power Mr. Breckinridge affirmed to belong solely to Congress, and cited authorities supporting this view, including a recent decision of Chief Justice Taney in the case of one Merryman, arrested for raising rebel recruits in Maryland and confined in Fort McHenry. Application being made to Judge Taney for a writ of *habeas corpus* in the case, he ordered General Cadwallader, commanding in that quarter, to bring Merryman into court. This was refused until after the General had consulted his superiors at Washington, and thereupon the Judge ordered Cadwallader's arrest for contempt. The Marshal sent to serve the writ of attachment against the General was refused admission to Fort McHenry. On receiving this return from his officer, Judge Taney declared that the President had no authority to "suspend the privileges of the writ of *habeas corpus*," and that "a military officer has no right to arrest and detain a person, nor to subject him to the Rules and Articles of War, for an offense against the laws of the United States, except in aid of the judicial authority"; but to proceed with *posse comitatus* against a "notoriously superior force" was impossible, and the Marshal had done all in his power to discharge his duty.

On the first point authorities differ, but the concluding opinion is indisputable. When war rules, the man on the bench has no chance with the man on horseback.

There were other acts against which the ex-Vice-President protested in the name of the Constitution and of the people he represented:

You have martial law all over the land. . . . Individuals are seized without legal warrant and imprisoned. The other day, since Congress met, a military officer in Baltimore was appointed a marshal of that city. Will any one defend the act? . . . Has not the President of the United States, by one broad, sweeping act, laid his hands upon the private correspondence of the whole country? \* . . . We may have this joint resolution to approve these acts and make them valid, but we can not make them valid in fact.

And upon this "usurping" Abraham Lincoln, duly elected President of the thirty-four States of the Union, Mr. Breckinridge — having set the tune for Vallandigham and other successors in opposition — went a few days later to acknowledge and fight for Jefferson Davis as President of eleven of those States, who had not even a claim of being elected to that office by their people. Nor had Breckinridge even the excuse of "going with his own State."

Mr. Kennedy, of Maryland, during the debate, expressed his belief that the Union could not be reconstructed by war; and coming more directly to the resolution, he asked Mr. Wilson if he was "apprised of any necessity for, or any reasons that require or justify, the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* in Maryland." As might have been expected, the Massachusetts Senator, thus invited, found no lack of material for his

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\* This referred to the seizure (May 20th) of dispatches accumulated at certain telegraph offices during the year preceding.

response, concluding: "If there ever was in any portion of the republic any spot of earth, or any time, where and when the writ of *habeas corpus* ought to be suspended, the city of Baltimore was the spot, and the last few weeks the time, for its suspension."

The main purposes of the resolution, which did not come to a final vote, were accomplished in another form, with but few opposing voices in either house. An act was passed authorizing the President to call out the militia to suppress rebellion, and another giving him power to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* — obviating objections from those who differed from the majority as to the executive power in the premises.

Secretary Cameron's report showed that the total force mustered into the military service for three months under the call of April 15th was "not less than eighty thousand"; and under the call of May 3d for "volunteers to serve during the war," two hundred and eight regiments had been accepted — all being mustered in except fifty-five regiments, which would be "in the field in twenty days." Adding the regular army, including the new regiments, twenty-five thousand strong, he gives the aggregate of troops "now at command of the Government" as three hundred and ten thousand, and "after the discharge of the three months' men, two hundred and thirty thousand." On the 2d of July (the day after the date of Mr. Cameron's report) the President issued a proclamation calling for three hundred thousand additional volunteers.

No financial suggestions were made by the President in his message, that subject being left to the report of Secretary Chase, required by law to be made directly



to Congress. Mr. Chase had no inspired utterance to make on the methods of raising a revenue to meet the extraordinary demands on the treasury, which he had found in so disheartening a condition. He stated the plain facts of the case, with well considered estimates of receipts to be expected under existing laws. His main reliance for funds, of course, was on Congressional authority to borrow — that being further dependent on the confidence of capitalists and on his own skill in bargaining. On the 10th of July the House passed a bill, reported from the Committee of Ways and Means by its chairman, Thaddeus Stevens, which — as finally modified, concurred in by the Senate, and approved by the President on the 17th — authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to borrow, within one year from the date of the act, a sum not exceeding two hundred and fifty million dollars, either on bonds bearing not exceeding seven per cent. interest, payable semi-annually, and redeemable in twenty years, or at any time after five years at the pleasure of the Government; or on Treasury notes of not less than fifty dollars, payable three years after date, with interest at seven and three-tenths per cent. For the faithful and punctual payment of the interest, in both cases, the import duties on tea, coffee, sugar, spices, wines and liquors were specially pledged, as well as such excises and other internal taxes as should be received into the treasury. The only Representatives voting against this bill on its passage were Messrs. Burnett, Norton, Reid, Vallandigham, and Benjamin Wood. Mr. Vallandigham preceded his vote with a violent speech in opposition to the Administration and the war. Mr. Burnett (of Kentucky) soon after, like Mr.

Breckinridge, joined the Confederate army. Messrs. Norton and Reid were from Missouri, and took a like course. The remaining two, one from Ohio, the other from New York, continued according to this beginning, in Congress or out of it, until the war ended.

By an act approved on the 5th of August, the list of dutiable articles of import was enlarged, and an act was passed levying a direct tax of \$20,000,000, apportioned among the States, including those in insurrection, to which fell a share amounting to \$8,000,000.

The Secession Congress met on the 20th of July at Richmond, to which place the executive offices had been transferred from Montgomery on the 21st of May. There was now but one more step—as the Confederates seem to have supposed—and that a short one, for the new government on its way to the city of Washington. The State of Virginia, at the time of Davis's arrival there, before the end of May, had already thirty thousand troops either in camps of instruction or on duty,—some at Norfolk, some on the Peninsula, and others at different points farther north,—under the chief command of General Robert E. Lee. He and his second in command, General J. B. Magruder, were classmates of Jefferson Davis at West Point, and under the auspices of the three the work of organizing the Confederate army was rapidly pushed forward.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1861.

### *A Battle — Outlook at Home and Abroad.*

Instead of a Confederate force at Manassas Junction early in May, there were sanguine people at Washington who thought there should have been a Union army at Gordonsville. The example of Lyon and Blair in Missouri seemed to encourage like boldness and promptitude in Virginia. Holding Manassas, the enemy covered all the railway communications with the Shenandoah Valley; holding Gordonsville, the Government would have controlled not these alone, but also the railway by Lynchburg into Eastern Tennessee. Secretary Chase, for one, believed the occupation of Gordonsville practicable, and urged it as the first military duty. The Lieutenant-General was not of this mind. Gordonsville, ninety miles from Alexandria by rail, was seventy miles from Richmond and well to the westward; the Rappahannock River was a formidable barrier to be encountered early on the way, and the work altogether was not to be done off-hand without preparation. After securing Fortress Monroe on the Peninsula, Scott chose to wait until the form of a popular vote on the ordinance of Secession had been gone through with before sending into Virginia, either Eastern or Western, so much as a company of soldiers. Meanwhile, Confederate armies

had advanced far north and east of Gordonsville; across the Rapidan; across the Rappahannock; even within menacing distance of the national capital.

General Beauregard took command at Manassas Junction — twenty-seven miles from Washington — on the 2d of June; General Joseph E. Johnston, with a smaller force, held Harper's Ferry; and there was a brigade under General Holmes at Acquia Creek, on the Potomac below, in near communication with Fredericksburg. Beauregard advanced his outposts to Fairfax Courthouse, midway between Manassas and Washington, and eastward to Leesburg, near the Potomac above. For weeks there were only some slight collisions in this quarter; Patterson, sent with a force to oppose Johnston, tardily crossed the Potomac, and early in July occupied Martinsburg and Bunker Hill, ten miles from Winchester, to which Johnston retired.

In and around Washington an army of fifty-three thousand men, of whom three thousand were regulars, had been gathering since the 18th of April. The city had a decidedly military aspect. For weeks it was an evening pastime of visitors and residents of both sexes to drive to the camps at the hour of dress parade. When at length the troops on the Washington side began in July to cross the river, it was understood that serious work was at hand. To see a battle — an opportunity that might not occur again in a lifetime — was naturally an object of desire to many civilians, though the passes required were but sparingly given. There was no such general rush of people into Virginia as exaggerated accounts of the time would imply.

McDowell's army consisted of five divisions: First,



D. Tyler's — brigades of Keyes, Schenck, W. T. Sherman and Richardson; second, D. Hunter's — brigades of Andrew Porter and Burnside; third, Heintzelman's — brigades of Franklin, Wilcox and O. O. Howard; fourth, Runyon's — seven regiments of New Jersey troops, not brigaded for the field, but used in guarding communications; fifth, D. S. Miles's — brigades of Blenker and Davies. To the first division were attached Carlisle's, Ayer's, and Varian's batteries, and a company of the Second U. S. Cavalry; to the second, a Rhode Island battery, one company of the Fifth U. S. Artillery, and two companies of the Third U. S. Cavalry; to the third, two companies of the Second U. S. Artillery and one of the Second U. S. Cavalry; and to the fifth, a company of the Third U. S. Artillery. McDowell had submitted to the General-in-Chief a plan of operations, and an advance had been ordered to begin on the 8th of July; but that day found the army still unready; and even when the marching actually began, on Tuesday, the 16th, disorder and delay in the movement of trains and otherwise lost further time. The advance stopped for the night at Fairfax Courthouse, only reaching Centreville on the 17th. McDowell had disposed his forces with a view to capture the Confederate detachments at Fairfax Courthouse and Centreville, which seemed possible with prompt execution of his orders, but before morning both places were evacuated.

Soon came the report to Washington, in various forms and from different sources, that Richardson's brigade had been repulsed with severe loss at Blackburn's Ford, four miles beyond Centreville. Coming within a mile or two of Bull Run at that ford, a recon-

noitering party learned that the enemy had a battery on the hither side of the stream, and so placed as to enfilade the road, while skirmishers occupied woods and houses in front. Tyler ordered forward the entire brigade, followed by Sherman as a reserve. The advance soon came under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery from Longstreet's command, and Richardson's men were not extricated without serious losses and disorder.

For the next three days McDowell's forces were encamped at and near Centreville. The enemy was in position along the south bank of Bull Run, guarding the fords from Union Mills to the Stone bridge—a distance of seven or eight miles. The three principal roads from Centreville crossing the stream were: that taken by Richardson on the 18th, leading due south to Manassas Junction; another bearing to the right to the Stone bridge, three or four miles above, and known as the Warrenton pike; and the third, to the left, crossing by a ford at Union Mills about the same distance below. From Bull Run the country ascends by a gradual rise towards Centreville, about four miles north—a straggling village overlooking the plains, which extend to Manassas Junction, near the same distance beyond the Run.

On the morning of the 21st, Ewell's brigade held the Confederate right near Union Mills, supported by Holmes' brigade, which had been withdrawn from Acquia Creek; and the commands of D. R. Jones, Longstreet, Bonham, and Cooke, with other forces, extended the line to nearly a mile beyond the Stone bridge, Evans being on the extreme left. Early's brigade was held in reserve within supporting distance of

Jones and Ewell. The bulk of the Confederate force was on its right, without material change, during the last three days, of the positions taken, with the expectation that McDowell — as he in fact originally intended after a demonstration at Blackburn's Ford — would seek to turn the right of Beauregard's line. On this Sunday morning, however, both the opposing commanders were proceeding to execute newly formed plans, each having issued orders for an offensive movement.

Reporting to General Scott on Friday, after a "personal reconnoissance of the roads," McDowell designated the Manassas Gap Railway as his present objective point, his aim being: "To destroy the railroad at or near Gainesville, and thus to break up the communication between the enemy's forces at Manassas and those in the valley of Virginia before Winchester." Beauregard, having massed his troops on the right — a large portion of Johnston's army having already arrived — had given orders for an advance from Union Mills with a view to outflank McDowell and move upon the capital, and was getting impatient at Ewell's unexpected delay in starting, when the sound of Union guns far away to his left caused an abrupt change of front. Instead of the march on Washington, there were now hurry and bustle to prepare for defense.

McDowell's plan required possession of the Stone bridge and the Warrenton pike, extending in a straight line from Centreville to Gainesville. Tyler and Hunter were to start in the early morning — the former taking up a position near the bridge, while Hunter should make a flanking detour, crossing above, near Sudley

Springs, and descending the opposite bank. Heintzelman was to follow Hunter as far as the defended ford, a mile above the bridge, and there await his arrival on the other side; both Tyler and Heintzelman to co-operate with Hunter. Miles's division and Richardson's brigade of Tyler's were ordered to "threaten the Blackburn Ford, and remain in reserve at Centreville."

The head of Hunter's column, having crossed unopposed, took the road toward Manassas. For the first mile thick woods were on his left quite to the Run, and on his right woods alternating with fields; then came a more open country, rolling and cultivated, down to the Warrenton road. Soon after Burnside's advance reached this cleared space the enemy opened fire, the Rhode Island and New Hampshire men sustaining the attack until Porter's regulars and a regiment sent across the stream by Heintzelman came up, when, after a sharp engagement, their assailants were driven south of the Warrenton road and across Young's Branch, running at the foot of a hill, over which the Sudley Springs road continued. The brigades of Sherman and Keyes were now at hand, with the remainder of Heintzelman's division; the Stone bridge and the pike were freed, and under close pursuit the enemy retired up the slopes and into the woods. A large part of his force was still miles away. The fighting had begun at half-past 10 o'clock. Noting well the position now gained, but little after noon, and bearing in mind McDowell's objective point, what remained but to move rapidly on Gainesville? Instead, there was a pause. Beauregard, hurrying his distant troops hither, made good use of the time.



Forming his lines, he recovered by a gallant charge the ground lost south of the Warrenton pike, not far from Groveton, and occupied heights on his left, overlooking the road farther west. Assailed and driven back, he again advanced; and thus long and hotly the conflict raged. Here was the vital point of battle. In three successive charges the Confederates were repulsed. Previously their front ranks had been "driven nearly a mile and a half"; it was now after 3 o'clock, and "it was supposed by us all," wrote McDowell, "that the [third] repulse was final." The enemy "was driven entirely from the hill, and so far beyond it as not to be in sight, and all were certain the day was ours."

But the enemy had had full time to gather his forces, including the last installment from Winchester — Johnston himself and most of his army having arrived before the fight began. To destroy the Manassas railway "near Gainesville" matters little now, were it possible. Patterson lamentably failed to detain his adversary as expected; Patterson and his men count for nothing to-day. McDowell's crowning opportunity was lost. While his men refreshed themselves, the enemy stole quietly through the woods and beyond his right, then suddenly, with deadly volleys and terrific yells, assailed his flank. In confusion and panic the broken phalanxes fled down the slope and along the pike by which they came. McDowell tried to rally them far to the rear, using his reserves to guard the fugitives from annihilating pursuit. A defensive line was formed along the Centreville ridge. Toward this barrier the tidal wave swept resistlessly on. Despite the barrier, all night a

throng was on its way to the old camping-ground, or beyond.\*

Next day, "Blue Monday," in a pouring rain, with little respite from dawn to dark, blue-bloused men were continually arriving, dazed and weary, in Washington. "Rally the army and save the capital!" had been the last message of a favorite staff officer to the Lieutenant-General at midnight. At noon Congress gathered in dismal session. On motion of Mr. Crittenden, the House, with but two ("radical") dissenting votes, resolved:

That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the Disunionists of the Southern States now in revolt against the Constitutional Government, and in arms around the Capital; that in this National emergency Congress, banishing all feeling of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to the whole country; that this war is not waged on our part in any spirit of oppression, nor for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of the States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union, with all the dignities, equality and rights of the several States unimpaired; and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease.

To such a culminating epoch had four months of Lincoln's administration come.

During these months we have seen the President busily occupied with changes in the civil service; with the complications at Charleston and Pensacola, and with

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\* The numbers actually engaged on each side in the Battle of Bull Run (or Manassas) were nearly the same—about 18,000. The Union losses were: 481 killed, 1,411 wounded, 1,216 prisoners, and 28 guns; Confederate losses: 387 killed, 1,582 wounded.

the organization and equipment of military and naval forces. He was also anxious about the attitude of foreign governments, and gave careful attention to the diplomatic instructions sent out by the Secretary of State. The burdensome daily pressure for personal interviews had continued with little abatement, and to callers of whatever condition he was amiably indulgent always.

Society also had claims, which were not neglected by the lady of the White House, though in local circles at the outset there was scant complacency toward the "Republican court." There was no lack of sneers, in fact, or of disparaging inventions. The foreign legations were mostly in sympathy with the prevailing tone. To Mr. Russell, of the London *Times*, who had dined at the White House early in April, some of the lady residents used great freedom of speech. He noted in his diary, when just starting for the South, April 12th:

Some ladies said to me that when I came back I would find some nice people in Washington, and that the rail-splitter and his wife, the Swards, and all the rest of them, would be driven to the place where they ought to be: "Varina Davis is a lady, at all events, not like the other. We can't put up with such people as these."

The same correspondent and diarist, after returning from the South, had ridden out towards Manassas to get a glimpse of the battle he was to describe, but was so late that he met only retreating soldiers miles from the field. Shut up in his room on Monday, writing his impressions of the Union disaster for the information of Europe, he made this entry in his diary (July 22d):

Why Beauregard does not come I know not, nor can I well guess. I have been expecting every hour since noon to hear his cannon. Here is a golden opportunity. If the

Confederates do not grasp that which will never come again on such terms, it stamps them with mediocrity.

The repulse and rout of McDowell's army became definitely known throughout the land on Monday. Everywhere the next news was dreaded, lest it should be that the capital was taken and the Government dispersed. But hour after hour, day after day, wore on without a further move of the enemy than resuming his outposts at Centreville and other points occupied before the battle. On the Union side consternation, exasperation, determination, quickly followed each other in the popular mind. Causes of the failure were discussed; there were grumblings about the soldiers, their officers, and the Government; yet there is no lack of examples as bad on the part of the best soldiers, even veterans, the most capable Generals, the most skillful and trustworthy rulers. Experience was educating both soldiers and commanders. A year or two later such tardiness of preparation and movement as preceded this battle, such halts and delays as there were at the very turning point and moment, would have been deemed inexcusable. The President, believing McDowell unfortunate rather than incapable, remanded him to a less responsible position, with consoling assurances of continued confidence. Patterson was less easily forgiven by the people. His successor in the department was Major-General Nathaniel P. Banks, whose place at Baltimore was assigned to Major-General John A. Dix — that Secretary of the Treasury who, during the late winter of discontent, had telegraphed to an officer of his department at the South: "If any man attempts to haul down the flag, shoot him on the spot!"



General McClellan was promptly summoned to Washington from West Virginia, and placed at the head of the Army of the Potomac, as it was thereafter called. He was credited with a "celerity of movement" in his late operations quite in contrast with the motions thus far exemplified in this army — save in its retreat from Bull Run. He had sent inspiriting bulletins announcing victories, which now more than ever seemed a commendable thing to do. He was everywhere hailed by the press and the people as a rescuing chief, and to excited imaginations was radiant with reflected glories of the future.

To Major-General John C. Fremont, who had been given this rank in the regular army in May, had already been assigned the Department of the West, with headquarters at St. Louis. His department, created on the 6th of July, included the States of Illinois, as well as the States and Territories west of the Mississippi River and east of the Rocky Mountains. Fremont and Banks assumed their respective commands on the 25th of July. General McClellan, given his new command on the same day, arrived in Washington on the 26th.

Confederate success in the first real battle, fought almost within hearing of the Federal capital, gave the victors abundant prestige abroad. This was the more effective from the fact that Mr. Seward, in his diplomatic communications — not without regard to influence upon Conservatives and Southern Unionists at home — had eliminated the slavery question altogether from the issues of the war. Before setting out on his mission Mr. Adams was instructed (April 10th):

You will make no admission of weakness in our Constitution, or of apprehension on the part of the Government. . . . You will in no case listen to any suggestions of compromise by this Government with its discontented citizens. If, as the President does not at all apprehend, you shall unhappily find Her Majesty's government tolerating the application of the so-called seceding States, or wavering about it, you will not leave them to suppose for a moment that they can grant that application and remain the friends of the United States. You may even assure them promptly in that case that if they determine to recognize, they may at the same time prepare to enter into alliance with, the enemies of this Republic. You alone will represent the whole of it there. When you are asked to divide that duty with others, diplomatic relations between the Government of Great Britain and this Government will be suspended, and will remain so until it shall be seen which of the two is most strongly intrenched in the confidence of their respective nations and of mankind.

In his letter of April 22d to Minister Dayton — in disregard of those who, like Mr. Sumner, had been urgent that the Administration, from the first, should be "pronounced on the side of freedom"—Mr. Seward said of the relations of slavery to the war:

Moral and physical causes have determined inflexibly the character of each one of the Territories over which the dispute has arisen;\* and both parties after the election harmoniously agreed on all the Federal laws required for their organization. The Territories will remain in all respects the same, whether the revolution shall succeed or shall fail.

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\* This recalls the words of Daniel Webster, in his conservative speech of March 7, 1850. California and New Mexico, he said, were "destined to be free . . . free by the arrangement of things ordained by the Power above us"—adding: "I would not take pains uselessly to reaffirm an ordinance of nature, nor to re-enact the will of God."

The condition of slavery in the several States will remain just the same, whether it succeed or fail.

These words, written while the city of Washington was isolated by the insurgents in April, were substantially indorsed by Congress in July, after a battle gained by disunionists "in arms around the capital." It is easy to see how such assurances from Mr. Seward might tend to build up a Union party to which Mr. Crittenden and other Southern leaders might belong; but for combating the influence of the Confederates in Europe, where the odium of slavery was their chief hindrance, the skill of such diplomacy is not obvious.

The Secretary had early undertaken to remedy the refusal of a previous Administration to concur in the declarations of the Paris Congress in 1856, which included the abolition of privateering; but all his attempts to have the case reopened were unavailing. He also labored hard, and quite uselessly, to secure a reversal of what was deemed the premature action of the British Government in conceding belligerent rights to the Confederates. England and France, it was known, had agreed to act in concert as to affairs pertaining to the Southern Confederacy; and Mr. Seward wrote to Minister Adams on the 3d of June that "the principal danger" apprehended by the President was that of "foreign intervention, aid, or sympathy on the part of Great Britain." What, then, might be the prospect abroad in the last days of July?

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1861.

*Congress — War-making and Slavery — Affairs in the West  
— Army and Navy Operations on the Coast.*

Congress remained in session until the 6th of August. The act providing for the levy of half a million men was uninfluenced by McDowell's defeat, having passed both houses before that event, though signed by the President the day after. The only legislation directly affecting the relations of master and slave — in the fourth section of the Confiscation act — was no more radical in principle than the President's instructions previously given to commanders in the field.

The war, winding its long line across the country over slave soil, was perpetually colliding with slavery itself. Our wars with Great Britain gave the South memorable lessons on this point. Tens of thousands of slaves came within the British lines, voluntarily or otherwise, during the Revolutionary War, never to be recovered. Thousands carried away by the same power in the War of 1812, first into the British provinces on the north, and afterwards colonized in Africa, were long a subject of negotiation between the two countries, but the slaves never returned. Thomas Jefferson, who himself had severe losses of this kind, came in his later days to have a dread of servile insurrection in case of war



with a foreign power and invasion of Southern territory; and Andrew Jackson in 1843, arguing for the annexation of Texas, presented this peril in strong colors. The uprising of slaves in Southeastern Virginia in 1831, and a similar trouble in Louisiana, combining with the horrors of the San Domingo insurrection, excited apprehensions which fervid imaginations dwelt upon, picturing the possibilities of a servile outbreak in this country on such a scale, and with such opportunities, as could nowhere else be paralleled.

The military proclamations of McClellan, Patterson, and Butler, on taking the field, reveal a consciousness of this dread, and a wish to allay it. Were not men who eschewed all race and caste distinctions, like Lloyd Garrison, consistent in denouncing these Northern Generals for offering under any circumstances to turn against their fellow-men seeking to be free? On military principles, it was argued that a servile insurrection ought to be viewed as a welcome reinforcement. On the other hand, men at the South, no longer affecting to deny the danger, used these military proclamations to increase exasperation against the North as inciting servile insurrection, and to intimidate their slaves with the pretense that they were to be massacred.\*

One thing was certain — the inextricable complication of slavery with war-making on Southern soil.

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\* A respectable newspaper, the *Mobile Register*, said (May 25th): "Servile insurrection is a part of their program, and the slaves are to be indiscriminately slaughtered; and when the last one is butchered, then it is thought the institution will cease to exist. . . . The Syrian massacres of the Christians and all the crimes of its bloody participants pale before the proposed atrocities of the Black Republicans."

Daily experience illustrated this. Fugitive slaves were continually coming into the Union camps. Masters would come through the lines to reclaim their property. If all such claimants did not actually render the service of spies to the Confederates, if masters did not even send in their slaves and follow after for this express purpose, no thanks were due to the amiable Union commanders who gave the opportunity.

Butler, a Breckinridge Democrat in the Presidential canvass, found grave embarrassments as to the treatment of slavery thrust upon him soon after taking command at Fortress Monroe. Slaves escaping from actual service in Confederate batteries, and from other compulsory labor in aid of the rebellion, sought refuge within his lines. As a military officer, he saw clearly that such persons, at least, ought not to be sent back to help the enemy. He had the distinction of being the first commander to act upon the theory that such property was "contraband of war." This was thought a bright idea, and found great popular favor as well as approval by the Government. "Contrabands" were set at work on the side they preferred.

But the matter speedily assumed a wider bearing. Butler wrote to General Scott on the 27th of May:

The inhabitants of Virginia are using their negroes in the batteries, and are preparing to send their women and children south. The escapes from them are very numerous, and a squad has come in this morning, and my pickets are bringing their women and children. Of course, these can not be dealt with upon the theory on which I designed to treat the services of able-bodied men and women who might come within my lines, and of which I gave you a detailed account in my last dispatch. . . . I have, therefore, determined to employ, as I can do very profitably, the able-bodied

persons in the party, issuing proper food for the support of all, and charging against their services the expense of care and sustenance of the non-laborers. . . . Twelve of these negroes, I am informed, have escaped from the erection of the batteries on Sewall's Point, which fired upon my expedition as it passed by out of range. As a means of offense, therefore, in the enemy's hands, these negroes, when able-bodied, are of great importance. Without them the batteries could not have been erected, at least for many weeks. As a military question it would seem to be a measure of necessity, and deprives their masters of their services.

Secretary Cameron replied (May 30th), approving the General's action, and instructing him, while permitting no "interference" by persons under his command "with the relations of persons held to service under the laws of any State," to refrain from surrendering to alleged masters any persons coming within his lines. "The question of their final disposition" was "reserved for future determination."

Similar instructions were given to other department commanders. There was nothing more comprehensive or thorough in the action of Congress down to the close of the extra session — over two weeks after the unfortunate battle. In neither house was there a more zealous Abolitionist than Owen Lovejoy, who proposed nothing stronger than the following — an expression of opinion merely:

*"Resolved, That in the judgment of this House it is no part of the duty of the soldiers of the United States to capture and return fugitive slaves."*

This was adopted, yeas ninety-two, nays fifty-five — six Republicans voting against the resolution and no Democrat in its favor.

The fourth section of the "act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes," approved August 6th, simply provides — when relieved of luxuriant legal verbiage — that the owner of an escaping slave who had, with such owner's consent, been put to hostile service of any sort against the Government, should forfeit all right to reclaim such slave by judicial remedy. The act does not guarantee freedom to the fugitive; it promises him nothing. Whatever its practical purpose or effect, anything bearing the color of emancipation in terms would seem to have been studiously avoided. It does not go so far, in fact, as General Butler had gone, with the President's distinct approval, in making provision for the family of an able-bodied "contraband" employed within the Union lines, and also in refusing to surrender to a disloyal master any escaped slave, whether known to have been previously doing service in direct aid of the rebellion or not.

The Congressional high-water mark of abolitionism at the extra session had only this very moderate altitude.

In Missouri, after General Lyon's occupation of Booneville (June 18th), Jackson and Price retired to the southwest corner of the State, crossing the Osage River, and concentrating all available forces in Cedar County, early in July. With hardly four thousand men in all, Jackson set forward to meet Ben McCulloch, who was coming with reinforcements across the Arkansas boundary. On his way Jackson had a brush with General Franz Sigel, who hurried on to Springfield, where General Lyon joined him on the 10th with the main part of his command from Booneville. Lyon, greatly



outnumbered by the approaching enemy, asked for reinforcements, meanwhile strengthening his position at Springfield in expectation of an attack. The situation was substantially unchanged when Fremont arrived at St. Louis (July 25th) and took command of the department. Some days earlier, General John Pope had been assigned to the district of North Missouri, with the duty of protecting the railway from Hannibal across the State, and of safeguarding Union citizens and repressing guerrilla bands.

General Leonidas Polk — a West Point graduate, who left the army for the church, becoming in due time Bishop of Louisiana, and now turning back from altar to camp — had assumed the chief Confederate command in the West, with special concern for the salvation of Missouri and Kentucky. By his order, Price and McCulloch, three weeks after the Manassas battle, advanced against Springfield.

Five days after arriving at St. Louis, Fremont privately wrote to the President that nearly every county in Missouri was in an insurrectionary condition; that the enemy was advancing in force on the southern frontier; that “within a circle of fifty miles around General Prentiss” (at Cairo) there were above twelve thousand Confederate soldiers; and that five thousand Tennessee and Arkansas riflemen were advancing upon Ironton. He (Fremont) was “sorely pressed for arms”; the soldiers had not been paid; and some regiments were “in a state of mutiny.” He was in great want of money, and helped himself, as thus reported: “The Treasurer of the United States has here \$300,000 entirely unappropriated. I applied to him yesterday for \$100,000 for my paymas-

ter, General Andrews, but was refused. We have not an hour for delay. . . . This morning I will order the Treasurer to deliver the money in his possession to General Andrews, and will send a force to the treasury to take the money, and will direct such payments as the exigency requires."

It was eleven days yet to the encounter between Lyon and the enemy in the southwest. Fremont was not indifferent to the expected event, but only ordered two additional regiments to be sent to Springfield. Unhappily, Lyon was neither adequately supported nor withdrawn from his perilous situation. A man of bold courage, alert and aggressive as from the first, on learning that the enemy, about twenty thousand strong, was encamped at Wilson's Creek, nine miles away, he would neither retreat nor await the onset. On the afternoon of August 9th preparation was made for attacking Price and McCulloch at daybreak the next morning, one column under Sigel making a detour by the Fayetteville road to the Confederate rear, while Lyon, with the remainder of his forces, was to strike the adversary's advance camp. The movement began at 5 o'clock that evening. Lyon drove in the enemy's pickets very early on the morning of the 10th. The enemy was soon astir, and the fight went on with alternating onset and repulse until, before a terrific charge of the enemy, about 9 o'clock, the slender Union force seemed to waver. Lyon, whose horse had been shot under him, and who had himself been three times wounded during the morning, again mounted, put himself at the head of an Iowa regiment whose Colonel had been killed, and ordered a bayonet charge. Almost at the moment his breast was

pierced by a rifle ball, and he fell lifeless from the saddle. The charge was successful, and the action continued yet for more than two hours.

Meanwhile, two miles away, Sigel had struck the enemy's right with effect at an early hour. McCulloch moved in that direction in person and ordered up heavy reinforcements. Finally, Sigel was compelled to retreat, losing five guns, and with the rest of the army — Major Sturgis, of the regulars succeeding Lyon in command — fell back the next day to Rolla, in railway communication with St. Louis. The losses in the battle of Wilson's Creek, as shown by the war records, were: Union, 238 killed, 761 wounded; Confederate, 279 killed, 951 wounded.

Near the end of August, Price, from whom McCulloch and his men had withdrawn, set out on his march northward from Springfield. By the Missouri River Fremont had easy communication across the State, if properly secured by garrisoned forts above Jefferson City. It was not until after the 1st of September that Price was thought to be getting dangerously near, or that forces were sent up for the defense of Lexington. Yet Fremont, who, in the excitement following the death of General Lyon and the retreat of his army, had proclaimed martial law in St. Louis, now — two weeks later — extended that extreme measure over the whole State, saying in an order dated August 30th:

Circumstances in my judgment are of sufficient urgency to render it necessary that the commanding General of this department should assume the administrative powers of the State. . . . I do hereby extend and declare established martial law throughout the State of Missouri. . . . All persons who shall be taken with arms in their hands within

these lines shall be tried by court-martial, and, if found guilty, will be shot. Real and personal property of those who shall take up arms against the United States, or who shall be directly proven to have taken an active part with their enemies in the field, is declared confiscated to public use, and their slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared free men.

All persons who shall be proven to have destroyed, after the publication of this order, railroad tracks, bridges, or telegraph lines, shall suffer the extreme penalty of the law. . . .

At once, on reading this order, the President wrote privately to Fremont (September 2d):

Two points in your proclamation of August 30th give me some anxiety. *First* — Should you shoot a man, according to the proclamation, the Confederates would very certainly shoot our best men in their hands, in retaliation; and so man for man indefinitely. It is, therefore, my order that you allow no man to be shot, under the proclamation, without first having my approbation and consent. *Second* — I think there is a great danger that the closing paragraph in relation to the confiscation of property, and the liberating of slaves of traitorous owners, will alarm our Southern Union friends, and turn them against us — perhaps ruin our rather fair prospect for Kentucky. Allow me, therefore, to ask that you will, as of your own motion, modify that paragraph so as to conform to the first and fourth sections of the act of Congress entitled “An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes,” approved August 6th, 1861 — a copy of which act I herewith send you. This letter is written in a spirit of caution, and not of censure. I send it by special messenger in order that it may certainly and speedily reach you.

The General, who had actually begun to issue deeds of manumission to slaves, replied on the 8th, declining to recede except under a positive order, whereupon the President wrote him on the 11th:

Assured that you, upon the ground, could better judge of the necessities of your position than I could at this dis-



tance, on seeing your proclamation of August 30, I perceived no general objection to it; the particular clause, however, in relation to the confiscation of property and the liberation of slaves appeared to me to be objectionable in its nonconformity to the act of Congress, passed the 6th of last August, upon the same subject, and hence I wrote you, expressing my wish that that clause should be modified accordingly. Your answer, just received, expresses the preference on your part that I should make an open order for the modification, which I very cheerfully do. It is, therefore, ordered that the said clause of the said proclamation be so modified, held, and construed as to conform with and not to transcend the provisions on the same subject contained in the act of Congress entitled "An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes," approved August 6, 1861, and that said act be published at length with this order.

For thus restraining Fremont within the limits which Congress deemed proper in regard to slavery, the President did not escape criticism. Undue prominence was given to the incident for a time by many ardent persons, who thought something important in principle had been sacrificed to conciliate Kentucky and conservative Unionists. The wisdom of the President in annulling a subordinate's unauthorized order conflicting with the military policy which the Government had adopted must, however, have been generally conceded, even in the excitement of the period.

General Polk was pushing forward, early in September, regardless of Kentucky "neutrality," to occupy Columbus and Paducah; and Fremont wished his department extended so as to include Kentucky, Tennessee and Indiana — proposing a grand plan of operations in the West. Whatever Lincoln thought of these suggestions, he did not adopt them. Fremont had already

fallen into disfavor with some of the more radical men in Missouri, while conservatives like Attorney-General Bates and Provisional-Governor Gamble gave him no confidence after his manumission order. There were complaints, amounting to serious charges, in regard to contracts and the men who surrounded him, to the exclusion of others from a share in his councils; his ostentatious body-guard, and in general his assumption of the airs of a dictator. To many of his earliest friends — the Blair family included — he seemed wanting in tact, if not absolutely in administrative skill.

Fremont's ideas about the importance of the Cairo district and the organization of a gunboat service for co-operation in opening the river below were good, and his action in that direction was judicious. Credit is due him for the early and earnest attention he gave to the creation of the fleet of which Flag-officer Andrew H. Foote was put in command on the 26th of August. A former captain of the regular army, who had been commissioned as Colonel of the Twenty-first Regiment of Illinois volunteers in June, and as a Brigadier-General in August — Ulysses S. Grant — was given command of the district of Southeastern Missouri, including Cape Girardeau and Bird's Point, as well as Cairo and its immediate surroundings. By a timely movement in anticipation of the enemy already at Hickman and Columbus, Grant occupied Paducah, at the mouth of the Tennessee River, on the 6th of September.

Up the Missouri River, Price with his increasing army moved near the same time to get possession of Lexington, Missouri,—an important post, quite insufficiently guarded,—which Colonel Mulligan, of the Chi-

cago brigade, was now hastily dispatched from Jefferson City, with a total force of less than three thousand men, to occupy and fortify. Price arrived there on the 12th with a largely superior force. The garrison bravely repulsed Price's assaults, and it was only after close siege and the exhaustion of all resources that the place and its defenders were surrendered on the 20th. The commanding General, having full control of the river up to that point, was naturally blamed, not only for leaving Lexington so exposed, but especially for getting no effective relief to Mulligan during the eight days of his heroic defense.

Fremont, with the largest force available, presently took the field in person against Price, who, before the close of September, was again on his way southward. On the 8th of October Fremont paused at Tipton, on the Pacific Railway. Here he was visited by Secretary Cameron, accompanied by Adjutant-General Thomas and others, for conference with the General and for inspection of his army of thirty thousand men in camp. Cameron had the President's order relieving Fremont, to be used or not, at discretion, and decided to withhold it for the present. Before the General reached Springfield, his removal was positively determined, and he there received an order from the War Department to turn over his command to General Hunter. At that date, November 2d, Price and his main force were fifty miles away, at Pinesville.

In Kentucky a new Legislature was chosen at the August election. About three-fourths of the members of either branch were Unionists; and at the September session resolutions were passed which, after stating that

Kentucky had been invaded and the rights of her citizens grossly infringed "by the so-called Confederate forces," demanded that the Governor call out the militia to expel the invaders, and asked the Government of the United States for the aid guaranteed in such cases by the Constitution. It was also requested that General Robert Anderson, who had been prospectively assigned to the command in that military district, but was seeking much needed rest and recuperation, should immediately enter upon the active discharge of his duties. Governor Magoffin vetoed the resolutions, which were carried over his veto.

At an earlier date the Union leaders, lightly regarding the Governor's "neutrality," had taken measures for the enlistment of loyal soldiers, and for organizing two encampments: Camp Holt, near Louisville, under General Lovell H. Rousseau, and Camp Dick Robinson, in Garrard County, under General William Nelson. The Department of the Cumberland was created on the 6th of August, under the command of General Anderson, with Generals W. T. Sherman and George H. Thomas as subordinates next in rank. Anderson's name was of great value to the Union cause in his native State, yet he felt his health to be inadequate for assuming active command, and was presently relieved at his own request. Sherman succeeded him temporarily, but declined the permanent command, and was absent for some time on sick leave. The chief command of the department was then given to General Don Carlos Buell.

Hunter's assignment to succeed Fremont was not meant to be permanent. The real successor was called from California — General Henry W. Halleck, a West



Point graduate, who had resigned his army commission several years before, and was in lucrative practice as a lawyer. Both Halleck and Buell were assigned to their respective department commands on the 10th of November, and very soon entered on duty.

While Fremont was preparing to cross the Osage, a movement intended to restrain Polk from reinforcing Price was ordered to be made by Grant, with the aid of transports and two of Foote's gunboats, against Belmont, where there was a Confederate camp across the river from Columbus. Disembarking at Hunter's Point, two or three miles above Belmont, on the morning of the 7th, Grant's force rapidly advanced with little resistance until quite up to the outer works of the enemy. The place was soon carried, the tents and equipage burned, and the guns taken. While the men were resting and refreshing themselves, their way back to Hunter's Point was obstructed by superior numbers sent across the river above, and by the fire of Polk's batteries on the heights of Columbus. Grant, with thirty-five hundred men, contended for several hours with three regiments under Pillow, as many under Cheatham, and a reinforcement of two regiments more brought over by Polk in person. The bayonet was used again and again; it was an engagement at seemingly hopeless odds; yet Grant fought his way through, bringing off not only his own guns, but two of those captured at Belmont. Material assistance was rendered by the gunboats — an arm of the naval service that was to prove formidable henceforward on the Western rivers. While the Confederates were fairly entitled to add Belmont to their list of victories, there was yet something in the

conduct of Grant and his men in this engagement which relieved the result from the color of disaster.

In Western Virginia, General Rosecrans succeeded McClellan, with headquarters at Clarksburg during the month of August. General J. D. Cox had advanced from Guyandotte up the Kanawha Valley, when McClellan moved on Beverly. Cox occupied Charleston on the 25th of July, and Gauley Bridge on the 29th, ex-Governor Wise's command retreating into Greenbrier County. Here reinforcements reached him early in August — ex-Secretary Floyd included, who outranked Wise and was zealous for aggressive action. Rosecrans moved rapidly to the support of Cox at Carnifex Ferry, and after a sharp collision (September 10th), Floyd and Wise retired to Sewell's Mountain. General Robert E. Lee here joined them, assuming chief command, and, though he had superior numbers, waited to be attacked. Rosecrans finally withdrew (October 16th) without being pursued, and went into camp on New River. Lee returned to Richmond, with his reputation for the moment in a haze.

Preparations to enforce the blockade were pushed with vigor from the moment it was decided upon. Many steamers were bought or chartered and speedily made ready for naval service. Including water-craft of all sorts then used in naval operations, there were hundreds of new constructions. Captain Fox, as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, had a full share of credit for the efficiency of the department in this work. The large demand for volunteer seamen was so promptly met that the newly equipped vessels were adequately manned as fast as they were ready — generally by men inured to

marine life. Two blockading squadrons were organized: the Atlantic, under Flag-officer Silas H. Stringham, and the Gulf, under Flag-officer William Mervine. By the 1st of July, Stringham had twenty-two vessels, with a total of 296 guns and 3,300 men; and Mervine, twenty-one vessels, 282 guns, and 3,500 men.

A combined military and naval expedition under General Butler and Commodore Stringham left Hampton Roads on the 26th of August, and next day arrived off Hatteras Inlet, the entrance to Pamlico Sound. The place was defended by two forts, garrisoned by a force of seven hundred men, under the command of Commodore S. Barron, a seceder from the United States Navy. Fire was opened on the enemy's works on the morning of the 28th, and on the 29th the place was surrendered, with its garrison, guns, and stores. Here was one of the favorite haunts of blockade-runners, a number of which vessels, unaware of the change of command in the harbor, ran in and were welcomed as prizes. The prompt success of this expedition gave great satisfaction at the North, as the first severe return blow after the day at Manassas.

Another like enterprise, under General Thomas W. Sherman and Commodore S. F. Dupont, destined for Port Royal harbor, encountered a severe storm, soon after starting on the 29th of October, causing some losses and delay. The harbor was defended by works at Hilton Head and Phillips Island, opposite. Dupont began his attack on the forts in the morning of November 7th, and after five hours' fighting, the enemy took to flight. Permanent possession of this important harbor was now secure. Had the army pressed forward at

once, it was maintained at the time,—and this is fully confirmed by the opinion of General R. E. Lee, published after the war,—Charleston and Savannah were at the mercy of Sherman. Either his orders were at fault, or this was not the right Sherman. He paused, and only occupied Beaufort, on Port Royal Island, on the 8th of December — a month after Dupont had captured the two forts on Tybee Island, below Savannah, insuring the speedy “repossession” of Fort Pulaski, which was within shelling distance.

The Sea Islands, famous for their cotton, were at once brought under Government control. The plantations on fifteen islands, large and small, numbered two hundred, and there were about eight thousand negroes left behind by the whites in their flight. Several thousand colored fugitives came into the camp at Hilton Head, who were taken care of under instructions similar to those given to General Butler the previous summer.

Two other military-naval expeditions had also been for some time in preparation, with concealed destination,—one, in fact, to Roanoke Island, the other to New Orleans,—which did not get under way until after the close of the year.

The most exciting naval incident of the season was the arrest of ex-Senators Mason and Slidell on their way to Europe as Confederate ambassadors. Embarking at Charleston on the *Theodora*, a blockade-runner, they had safely reached Havana, where they took passage on the British mail-steamer *Trent*. Captain (later Rear-Admiral) Charles Wilkes, of the *San Jacinto*, cruising in Cuban waters, stopped the *Trent* while proceeding on her voyage, and forcibly transferred the two emissaries



and their secretaries to his own vessel, to the great indignation of the English captain and his captured passengers. This happened on the 8th of November, but was unknown in Washington or London for several days. Wilkes reported full details to Secretary Welles, who promptly responded in a complimentary letter on the last day of November. Wilkes brought his prisoners to New York, from whence they were sent to Fort Warren, in Boston harbor.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

1861.

*Army of the Potomac — Ball's Bluff — McClellan Succeeds  
Scott as General-in-Chief — Congress — Mes-  
sage — The Trent Trouble.*

During these summer and autumn months the army at Washington was absorbing the main share of men and means. Recruits came in rapidly; even by the 1st day of August the enemy was undoubtedly outnumbered, and time was precious, as Treasury ledgers proved. September found this army doubled in strength and still in camp. The enemy had advanced in force to Centreville; to Fairfax Courthouse; had, indeed, an outpost at Munson's Hill, in sight of the capitol dome. Above the city he held Leesburg and the right bank of the Potomac, and he blockaded the river below. The only direct railway communication with the West was broken at Harper's Ferry. An invasion of Maryland was menaced both by the upper and the lower Potomac.

Six days after McDowell's defeat, McClellan found in camp about fifty thousand men. Scott believed the capital in no danger, and McClellan at the time estimated that twenty thousand men would suffice for its security. When, six months later, he wrote, "The city was almost in a condition to have been taken by a dash of a regiment of cavalry," his language was misleading,

unless understood as extravagantly expressing an engineer's estimate of the weakness of the city's defensive works. The fortifications begun under the direction of Chief Engineer Barnard before McClellan came to Washington were so rapidly pushed that thirty-two forts were completed before the end of September. Two months later there were forty-eight, and early in January the whole number designed on both sides of the river — in all fifty-two.

Two interesting incidents of the first few days after McClellan's arrival, and before he was invested with the command of all the forces reorganized as the Army of the Potomac,—namely, his all-embracing plan submitted to the President, and his collision with his superior officer, the Lieutenant-General,—were little known to the public at the time, and have received slight attention since. Lincoln was anxious to learn the views of his new General concerning the business intrusted to him, and early made inquiry to that end, probably expecting no elaborate plans, and least of all a survey of the field at large. In response, however, McClellan on the 4th of August presented a "memorandum" of generous dimensions, and so broad in scope as to include a treaty with Mexico, authorizing troops from our Pacific States to land at the port of Guaymas and march across Mexican territory to Texas and New Mexico. This would not only help to defeat the rebel designs in that region, but also to protect and develop "the latent Union and free-State sentiment well known to predominate in Western Texas, and which, like a similar sentiment in West Virginia, will, if protected, ultimately organize that section into a free State." He noted the impor-

tance of reopening the Mississippi River and its "tendency upon all questions connected with cotton," urging that it had "become necessary to crush a population sufficiently numerous, intelligent and warlike to constitute a nation," and continued:

The authority of the Government must be supported by overwhelming physical force. Our foreign relations and financial credit also imperatively demand that the military action of the Government should be prompt and irresistible. The rebels have chosen Virginia as their battlefield, and it seems proper for us to make the first great struggle there. But while thus directing our main efforts, it is necessary to diminish the resistance there offered us, by movements on other points both by land and water.

He advises "that a strong movement be made on the Mississippi, and that the rebels be driven out of Missouri," and suggests the seizure of "the railroads leading from Memphis to the East" by a movement into Eastern Tennessee, sustaining the Union people there and receiving their co-operation. Getting nearer to his own field, he thinks that "at as early a day as practicable, it would be well to protect and reopen the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad," and that sufficient garrisons should occupy Baltimore and Fortress Monroe. Calculating in advance of experience, he judges that —

The importance of Harper's Ferry and the line of the Potomac in the direction of Leesburg will be very materially diminished so soon as our force in this vicinity becomes organized, strong, and efficient, because no capable General will cross the river north of this city, when we have a strong army here to cut off his retreat.

To "crush the rebellion at one blow" — to "terminate the war in one campaign" — his estimates call



for two hundred and seventy-three thousand soldiers (at the East) for "the main army of operations," and in addition, ten thousand to protect the Baltimore and Ohio Railway; while "five thousand will garrison Baltimore, three thousand Fort Monroe, and not more than twenty thousand will be necessary at the utmost for the defense of Washington." \*

As to the West, he thinks that few more troops will be needed in Missouri; that if Kentucky "assume the right position, not more than twenty thousand will be needed, together with those that can be raised in that State and Eastern Tennessee, to secure the latter region and its railroads, as well as ultimately to occupy Nashville"; and that the troops already in Western Virginia, "with not more than five to ten thousand from Ohio and Indiana, should, under proper management, suffice for its protection." He then tells what he would do with "the main army of operations":

I propose, with the force which I have requested, not only to drive the enemy out of Richmond, but to occupy Charleston, Savannah, Montgomery, Pensacola, Mobile, and New Orleans; in other words, to move into the heart of the enemy's country and crush the rebellion in its very heart.

To lighten the burdens of the Treasury, he suggests "only partial payments to our troops when in the enemy's country," and giving "the obligations of the United States for such supplies as may be there obtained."

This comprehensive and very interesting "memo-

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\* After the completion of the fortifications around Washington, a few months later, he estimated that to man the fifty-two forts would require 35,000.

randum" conveys no impression of the slightest concern on McClellan's part about the present security of Washington. Yet only four days after this review of the whole field of army operations — in itself unavoidably an occasion of offense to the General-in-chief, if known to him — McClellan wrote to Scott directly (August 8th), unsolicited, another review of the military situation, assuming that the capital is in "imminent danger," and urging "with the utmost earnestness" the measures which he thinks needful for the occasion. Next day the Lieutenant-General wrote to Secretary Cameron (the "only reply" he intended for this communication):

Had Major-General McClellan presented the same views in person, they would have been freely entertained and discussed. All my military views and opinions had been so presented to him without eliciting any remark, in our few meetings, which I have in vain sought to multiply. He has stood on his guard, and now places himself on record. Let him make the most of his advantage. Major-General McClellan has propagated, in high quarters, the idea expressed in the letter before me, that Washington was not only "insecure," but in "imminent danger." Relying on our numbers, our forts, and the Potomac River, I am confident in the opposite opinion; and considering the stream of new regiments that is pouring in upon us (before this alarm could have reached their homes), I have not the slightest apprehension for the safety of the Government here.

Having now been long unable to mount a horse, or to walk more than a few paces at a time, and, consequently, being unable to review troops — much less to direct them in battle — in short, being broken down by many particular hurts, besides the general infirmities of age — I feel that I have become an incumbrance to the army as well as to myself, and that I ought to give way to a younger commander — to seek the palliations of physical pain and exhaustion. Accordingly, I must beg the President, at the

earliest moment, to allow me to be placed on the *officers' retired list*, and then quietly to lay myself up — probably forever — somewhere in or about New York. But wherever I may spend my little remainder of life, my frequent and latest prayer will be: God save the Union!"

The President anxiously endeavored to dissuade the Lieutenant-General from a step so unwelcome, and to restore better relations between the two officers. The immediate effect appears in the following autograph letter (copied by the writer, with Secretary Stanton's consent, in 1864, but not published):

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

WASHINGTON, August 12, 1861.

*The Honorable, the Secretary of War:*

SIR: — On the 10th instant I was kindly requested by the President to withdraw my letter to you, of the 9th, in reply to one I had received from Major-General McClellan, of the day before — the President, at the same time, showing me a letter to him from General McClellan, in which, at the instance of the President, he offered to withdraw the original letter on which I had animadverted.

While the President was yet with me, on that occasion, a servant handed me a letter, which proved to be an unauthenticated copy, under a blank cover, of the same letter from General McC. to the President. This slight was not without its influence on my mind.

The President's visit, however, was from the patriotic purpose of healing differences, and so much did I honor his motive that I deemed it due to him to hold his proposition under consideration for some little time. I deeply regret that, notwithstanding my high respect for the opinions and wishes of the President, I can not withdraw the letter in question, for these reasons:

1. The original offense given to me by Major-General McClellan (see his letter of the 8th instant) seems to have been the result of deliberation between him and some of the members of the Cabinet, by whom all the greater war questions are to be settled without resort to, or consultation with,

me, the nominal General-in-chief of the army. In further proof of this neglect — although it is unofficially known that, in the last week (or six days), many regiments have arrived, and others have changed their positions — some to a considerable distance — not one of these movements has been reported to me (or anything else) by Major-General McClellan; — while it is believed, and, I may add, known, that he is in frequent communication with portions of the Cabinet, and on matters appertaining to me. That freedom of access and consultation have, very naturally, deluded the junior General into a feeling of indifference toward\* his senior.

2. With such supports on his part, it would be as idle for me, as it would be against the dignity of my years, to be filing daily complaints against an ambitious junior, who, independent of the extensive advantages alluded to, has, unquestionably, very high qualifications for military command. I trust they may achieve crowning victories in behalf of the Union.

3. I have, in my letter to you of the 9th instant, already said enough on — to others — the disgusting subject, my many physical infirmities. I will here only add that, borne down as I am by them, I should, unavoidably, be in the way at headquarters, even if my abilities for war were now greater than when I was young.

I have the honor to be, sir, with high respect, your most obedient servant,

WINFIELD SCOTT.

Eventually, however, the Lieutenant-General consented for the present to remain at his post.

On the 17th of August the troops of the hitherto separate departments of Washington and Northeastern Virginia, together with those serving in the Shenandoah Valley, on the Upper Potomac, and in Maryland and Delaware, were consolidated under the name of the Army of the Potomac, with headquarters at Washington, to be under the command of Major-General

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\* The words "superiority over" had been erased, and "indifference toward" written above.



McClellan. Before the close of August sanguine people were expecting a speedy and victorious advance of the reorganized army. What were the numbers and condition of the force under Johnston? McClellan had an elaborate spy system, which ought to have given him exact information. But the Comte de Paris says the General singularly overrated the strength and discipline of the opposing army, giving Johnston a total of 150,000, "whereas in reality on the 31st of October it only numbered 66,243 in all, of whom only 44,131 were present in the field"; and was "equally mistaken in regard to the discipline of his adversaries." Jefferson Davis (as he says in his *Rise and Fall of the Confederacy*) visited Johnston at Fairfax Courthouse on the 1st of October, and found that, in spite of the frequent reinforcements sent him, he had still a force not much larger than on the 21st of July. We learn elsewhere that desertions were numerous. In fact, the difference in effective men was more than three to one in favor of McClellan's army.

On the 10th of September, the President, the Secretary of War, and the Governor of Pennsylvania visited certain regiments from that State in their camp. General McClellan was present, and shook hands with officers and men. A soldier ventured to say to him: "General, we are anxious to wipe out Bull Run; hope you will allow us to do it soon?" The prompt reply was: "Very soon, if the enemy does not run."

September passed away; October was passing; and all the while his army was increasing. There were daily regimental parades; less frequent but repeated brigade reviews; reviews of infantry, artillery, cavalry. Magnifi-

cent was the pageant of seventy thousand men arrayed on the slopes and meadows of Virginia on an October day, closing, as the onlooking multitude swarmed back towards the capital, with the music of heavy Confederate guns at Fairfax Courthouse — just a short march away. Was not this a final display preluding earnest battle? An authoritative intimation of such import was received by Dr. Russell, whose account of the disaster three months before had given such offense, and who was waiting to do justice to the return blow.

On the 20th reconnoissances were made all along the line. Johnston's left, extending to Leesburg, had been occupying Falls Church, with pickets well advanced toward the Chain Bridge, but in all that quarter up to and beyond Dranesville, to which McCall's division was sent, no enemy was now discernible. Smith, whose division camped near the Chain Bridge, accompanied by McClellan, FitzJohn Porter, and Hancock, reconnoitered to within two or three miles of Fairfax Courthouse, where the enemy seemed to be in some force, the only Confederates seen on this wide excursion. Heintzelman at the same time sent out a reconnoitering party from his post below Alexandria, with like result. From General Banks, at the other extreme, on the Upper Potomac, came the simultaneous report that the enemy had moved away from Leesburg. Stone, at Poolesville, on the immediate left of Banks, was informed by McClellan of the presence of McCall at Dranesville, and ordered to keep a good lookout on Leesburg to see if this movement had the effect to drive the enemy away. "Perhaps a slight demonstration on your part," it was added, "would have the effect to move

them." Stone reported in the evening that he had made a feint of crossing, and started a reconnoitering party towards Leesburg from Harrison's Island (in the Potomac River, between Poolesville and Leesburg); and that the party returned without meeting any enemy, but had come in sight of what they thought to be a small encampment. Colonel Devens was dispatched with three hundred men at midnight to surprise this supposed camp — which proved to be only an orchard or a twilight illusion. Devens was ordered to continue his observation in that quarter, if he found himself secure, and Colonel Raymond Lee was sent with part of his regiment to Ball's Bluff, on the Virginia side, to cover the return of Devens.

About 11 o'clock in the morning Stone reported to McClellan: "The enemy have been engaged opposite Harrison's Island; our men behaving admirably." Their unexpected assailants were the advance of Evans' brigade, four thousand strong, of the Confederate left, which had retired from Leesburg. Stone ordered Colonel E. D. Baker across from Harrison's Island, with reinforcements, to support Devens and to assume command — the combined forces numbering nearly two thousand. McClellan and Stone were in close communication all the time that Baker and his slender force were fighting gallantly and desperately, unaided, on the verge of a steep bluff, with no adequate provision for recrossing the wide river below. Baker fell. His men were scattered and pursued with slaughter — many driven down the bluff, shot at its foot, or drowned. Nearly three hundred lost their lives here or on the field above, and many more were wounded or captured.

The Ball's Bluff calamity was keenly felt. Intensity was added to the feeling by the loss of Senator Baker — not an inexperienced "political general," but one who had served with credit as commander of a regiment in the Mexican War — a popular orator, and one of the earliest Springfield friends of President Lincoln, whose grief was uncontrollable when news first came of this great personal loss. "I was much criticised and blamed for this unfortunate affair," wrote McClellan, twenty-five years after, "while I was in no sense responsible for it."\* In effect, the official responsibility was made to rest on General Stone, who was soon after arrested, under an order of Secretary Stanton, and finally released, after many months, without the trial for which he asked, or being informed as to the exact cause of this disfavor.

On the 22d, McClellan visited the camp at Poolesville, and after personal investigation of the situation, decided to withdraw from the Virginia side altogether, in that quarter, and the old positions were promptly resumed. The French Prince, Comte de Paris, who was later of McClellan's military household, said in his elaborate and faithful history of the war:

The check at Ball's Bluff cut short all the projects for the campaign which the organization of the army, the season, and the condition of the ground seemed to impose on General McClellan. That incident confirmed his mind in the false estimate he had formed of the strength of his adversary; notwithstanding the reports of all the reconnoitering parties he had sent out on the 20th, who had not seen the enemy in force anywhere, he did not dare to put his army in motion, and thus lost the best opportunity he ever had of beginning a successful and decisive campaign.

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\* McClellan's "Own Story," p. 190.



At this juncture, Lieutenant-General Scott, in a letter to the Secretary of War (October 31st), claimed his legal right to be placed on the retired list. He regretted to withdraw from the orders of a President who, he said, had always treated him with distinguished kindness and courtesy, and whom he knew, upon much personal intercourse, to be "patriotic without sectional partialities or prejudices, to be highly conscientious in the performance of every duty, and of unrivalled activity and perseverance."

The Cabinet unanimously approved the President's selection of General McClellan as Scott's successor. With complimentary formalities and addresses—the President and Cabinet calling on the veteran Lieutenant-General at his residence for the purpose on the 1st of November—his retirement was consummated. In apology for the inaction of the main army hitherto, it was alleged by particular friends of McClellan, and credited by Secretary Chase, that he had been hampered and obstructed by the Lieutenant-General. The President had shown a generous confidence in the young General, and hoped for speedy action. Yet the entire month of November, with constantly auspicious weather and roads, passed with the army of nearly two hundred thousand still in camp.

Adjourning in August, after providing the Executive with ample war resources, Congress little expected that, on returning in December, it would find the insurgent army still menacing the Capital. The President was blamed. It is as inconceivable that he should not have been as that he himself should have been fully satisfied with the conduct of his chief General. This

source of discontent and certain incidents of the disaster at Ball's Bluff led to the creation (in December) of a joint Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War, consisting of Senators Wade, Chandler and Andrew Johnson (the latter being soon succeeded by Senator Wright, of Indiana), and Representatives D. W. Gooch, J. Covode, G. W. Julian and M. F. Odell. It was not another Aulic Council, or in any sense its parallel. Attempting no control of military movements, it gave searching investigation to accomplished events. The testimony thus gathered, valuable to the historian, was from time to time submitted to the President.

Popular impatience with army inaction had found some relief in glorifying the activity of Commodore Wilkes in arresting Mason and Slidell; yet in his message the President says nothing of this naval exploit, or of its embarrassing sequel. After paying a high tribute to the retired Lieutenant-General, he continues:

With the retirement of General Scott came the Executive duty of appointing, in his stead, a General-in-chief of the army. It is a fortunate circumstance that neither in council nor country was there, so far as I know, any difference of opinion as to the proper person to be selected. The retiring chief repeatedly expressed his judgment in favor of General McClellan for the position, and in this the nation seemed to give a unanimous concurrence.

The Fremont trouble is not mentioned, or more nearly alluded to than (just after speaking of the blockade) in these words, among which "slavery" is not one:

So, also, obeying the dictates of prudence, as well as the obligations of law, instead of transcending, I have adhered

to the act of Congress to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes. If a new law upon the same subject shall be proposed, its propriety will be duly considered. The Union must be preserved; and hence all indispensable means must be employed. We should not be in haste to determine that radical and extreme measures, which may reach the loyal as well as the disloyal, are indispensable.

He speaks more at length in an earlier part of the message of some provision for colored persons affected by this first confiscation act, and urges the policy of providing for the colonization, not only of the newly enfranchised, but of all their race in this country who might choose to join them. What he said of the relations of labor and capital was notable and especially suggestive in regard to that anomaly in economics, labor "owned" by capital.

One passage in Secretary Cameron's report as originally presented was quite summarily effaced by the President — namely:

If it should be found that the men who have been held by the rebels as slaves are capable of bearing arms and performing efficient military service, it is the right, and may become the duty, of this Government to arm and equip them, and employ their services against the rebels, under proper military regulations, discipline, and command.

Arming the blacks was a troublesome matter, to be for the present postponed. As to the war, the President said in his message that he had "thought it proper to keep the integrity of the Union prominent as the primary object of the contest on our part, leaving all questions which are not of vital military importance to the more deliberate action of the Legislature." Events were tending "plainly in the right direction."

“South of the line, noble little Delaware led off right from the first. Maryland was made to seem against the Union. Our soldiers were assaulted, bridges were burned, and railroads torn up within her limits, and we were many days, at one time, without the ability to bring a single regiment over her soil to the Capital. Now her bridges and railroads are repaired and open to the Government; she already gives seven regiments to the cause of the Union and none to the enemy; and her people, at a regular election, have sustained the Union by a larger majority and a larger aggregate vote than they ever before gave to any candidate or any question. Kentucky, too, for some time in doubt, is now decidedly, and I think unchangeably, ranged on the side of the Union. Missouri is comparatively quiet, and I believe can not again be overrun by the insurrectionists. . . . After a somewhat bloody struggle of months, winter closes on the Union people of Western Virginia, leaving them masters of their own country.” A footing had been obtained on the southern coast at Hatteras, Port Royal, Tybee Island, near Savannah, and Ship Island; and there were some general accounts of popular movements, in behalf of the Union, in North Carolina and Tennessee. “These things demonstrate that the cause of the Union is advancing steadily and certainly southward.”

A marked change in the tone and temper of Congress in regard to the vexed question since the close of the special session was at once manifest. In advance of the message Senator Trumbull gave notice of a bill—which he introduced on the 5th—“for the confiscation of the property of the rebels, and giving freedom



to the persons they held in slavery." Representative Elliot, of Massachusetts, also, on the first day of the session, offered resolutions aimed at the latter object, which the House, by 56 ayes and 70 noes, refused to lay on the table. Messrs Stevens and Campbell, of Pennsylvania, each presented similar resolutions at the same sitting. On the other hand, a resolution reaffirming the conservative Crittenden resolution, which passed the House with only two dissenting votes in July, was laid on the table (December 3d) on motion of Thaddeus Stevens, 71 to 65. On the 16th, a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia was introduced by Senator Wilson. These and several later demonstrations against the Confederate corner-stone occupied much of the attention of both Houses throughout the session.

Commodore Wilkes had been thanked in a personal letter by Secretary Welles, and applauded in his official report, for the arrest of the Confederate Ambassadors, Mason and Slidell. With great haste and abundant zeal the House of Representatives by resolution unanimously commended the act. The press and the people had found no hero deemed so worthy of their worship since Anderson exchanged Moultrie for Sumter. The President could share the popular feeling without forgetting his official responsibility. When he had thought for a moment on first hearing news of the exploit, he said: "These men must be given up. We have no right to stop a British mail-ship to search for contraband passengers, whatever was formerly done by Britain herself."

The British were indignant when they heard the

tale told by the *Trent's* captain, and there was a general outcry for war. British regiments were promptly dispatched to Canada and more British warships were ordered to our Atlantic coast. Restitution and apology were demanded with all possible haste. Happily — so it seems — there was no submarine cable to speed irrevocable words. Weeks instead of hours measured the period of negotiation, giving leisure, as the correspondence went on, to calculate the proportion, in case of war, between cause and consequence.

The international crisis gave exultant hope to the Confederates and their friends. The Opposition members of Congress assumed the part of champions of Wilkes, and scorned any thought of yielding to English insolence and menace. They were delighted to believe the Administration was in a dilemma of which either horn would be its fate. There were leading Republican members, too, who — willing to take up the burden of another war if that were necessary — were for the moment intent upon sustaining the action of the gallant Commodore.

The decision was communicated to Congress on the 30th of December. Secretary Seward's final letter in the case, under date of the 26th, conceding that the detention of the *Trent* was technically wrong, disclaimed the act as unauthorized by the Government, and agreed to surrender the prisoners into British custody. No other reparation or apology was offered, and this was promptly accepted as an amicable conclusion of the whole matter. "This concession of the Federal Government," says Alfriend in his *Life of Jefferson Davis*, "was the first of numerous disappointments in store

for the Southern people in the hope, so universally indulged, of foreign intervention."

In his Diary, the exiled Polish Count, Gurowski, then employed in the State Department as a translator,—a man much given to extravagant and cynical utterances, yet trustworthy as to the direct statement of facts within his own knowledge,—wrote in December, 1861:

The Trent affair finished. We are a little humbled, but it was expedient to terminate it so. . . . Europe will applaud us, and the relation with England will become clarified. Perhaps England would not have been so stiff in this Trent affair but for the fixed idea . . . that Seward wishes to pick a quarrel with England. The first weeks of Seward's premiership point that way.

Mr. Seward has the honors of the Trent affair. It is well as it is; the argument is smart, but a little too long, and not in a genuine diplomatic style. But Lincoln ought to have a little credit for it, as from the start he was for giving the traitors up.

Mr. Seward's review of the case was so skillfully done as to soothe the public mind and relieve its dissatisfaction. While making the concession seem to turn on the point that Wilkes had not brought the *Trent* to port for judicial action, he courteously hinted to Lord John Russell that the American Government was more consistent in granting, than the British Government in making, the present demand.









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